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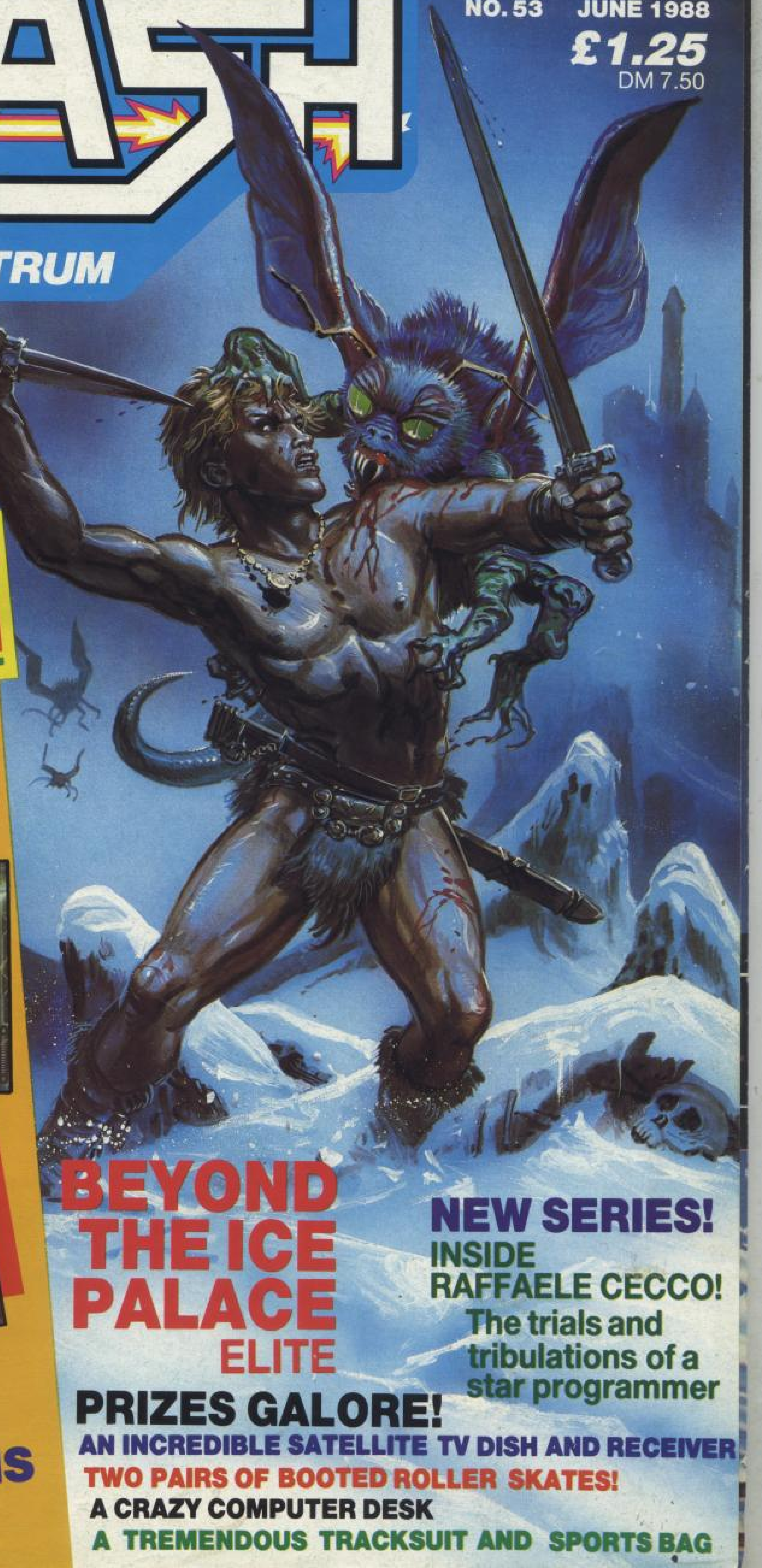
NO. 53 JUNE 1988

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CRASH

ZX SPECTRUM



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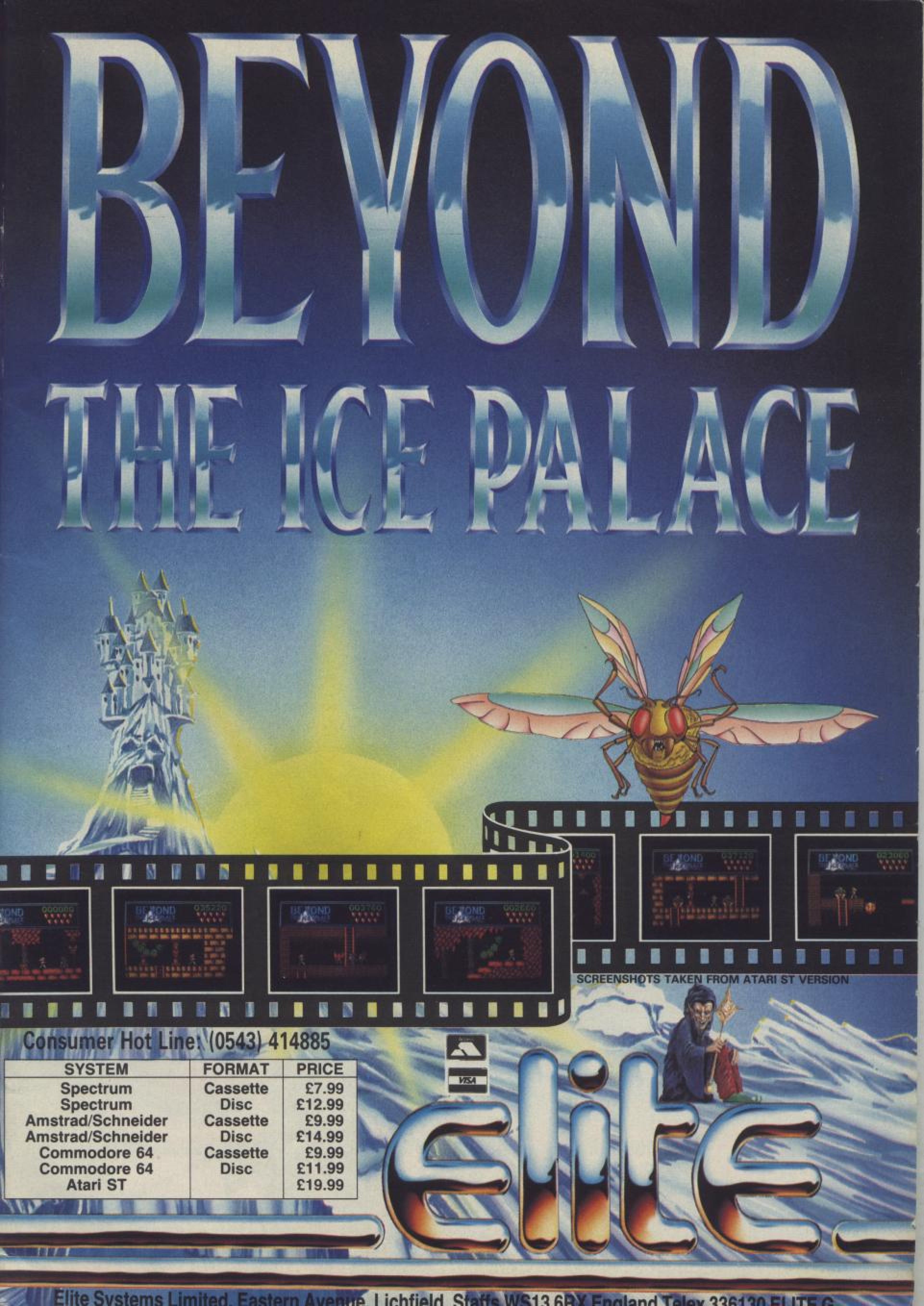
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CONTENTS

ALL THE LATEST COIN-OPS IN OUR FREE ARCADE BOOKLET

In our fabulous free booklet we take a look at all the arcade machines you'll likely to be playing this summer. Lots of colourful pictures and critical comment from the country's top arcade players. PLUS pages of hints 'n' tips on all your old favourites. Our comprehensive *COIN-OPS NOW!* booklet provides EVERYTHING you need to know!

MICROPROSE REVEALED!!

Despite a mere three releases on the Spectrum, MicroProse are arguably the leaders in home computer simulation games. In our first company profile we take a look at the US-based company. CRASH visited their Tetbury-based UK headquarters to find out what makes them tick.

Read all about them on page 30

DO IT YOURSELF



REGULARS

ISSUE 54 ON SALE JUNE 30

EDITORIAL
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COMPETITION RULES
The Editor's decision is final in all matters relating to adjudication and while we offer prizes in good faith, believing them to be available, if something untoward happens (like a game that has been offered as a prize being scrapped) we reserve the right to substitute prizes of comparable value. We'll do our very best to despatch prizes as soon as possible after the published closing date. Winners names will appear in a later issue of CRASH. No correspondence can be entered into regarding the competitions (unless we've written to you stating that you have won a prize and it doesn't turn up, in which case drop Frances Mable a line at the PO Box 10 address). No person who has any relationship, no matter how remote, to anyone who works for either Newsfield or any of the companies offering prizes, may enter one of our competitions.

NEWSFIELD
A NEWSFIELD PUBLICATION

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COVER DESIGN & ILLUSTRATION BY OLIVER FREY



STRAP THOSE SKATES ON, SCOOP THAT TRASH,
MIND YOU DON'T GET GRAVEL RASH, RIDE THOSE
SIDE WALKS, DON'T BE LAZY, EVERYBODY'S
SKATE CRAZY
IT'S AMAZING!!
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Screen shots from Amstrad version.
Gremlin Graphics Software Limited, Alpha House, 10 Carver Street

CRASH

ZX SPECTRUM

WE AIM TO PLEASE

Following a series of letters debating the CRASH reviewing process, I feel the need has arisen for a fresh overview of the proceedings. The part-time reviewing team that was in operation a few months ago had their individual ratings at the bottom of their comments boxes. In many cases, the fact that they were not reviewing full-time meant that when major discrepancies occurred, such as one reviewer giving 80%, and another 20%, it was often difficult to discuss the ratings given, and it was often felt that such a large range of marks was detrimental to the overall effectiveness of the review. The individual ratings were thus dropped.

Since this decision was made, letters have been pouring into the CRASH office pleading for their return. I myself have also felt that the reviews seem a little faceless and occasionally ambiguous with no specific rating on each comment. Well, since our new full-time reviewing team is now in operation there should be fewer problems in co-ordinating and comparing their feelings towards different games (and in truth, their individual ratings are pretty close most of the time anyway), so the individual percentages are back on!

Once more, you will be able to follow the trends of one reviewer if you desire, but there should be less variation in the individual marks which often gave the feeling of, 'Which one do I believe'. The increased size of the comments should also allow you to make up your own mind whenever differences of opinion do occur.

Phew! That's got that out of the way. If you have any feelings as regards this matter, drop Lloyd a note – I'm sure he'll pass them on to me.

Apologies to wargamers everywhere for the lack of Philippa's FRONTLINE column. A dearth in the flow of wargames has meant that she has simply had no new games to review; hopefully this should be remedied by next month.

I hope you caught your free arcade booklet as it slithered out of the mag! My thanks go to Julian Rignall who helped compile it and proffered most of the hints and tips. We certainly enjoyed putting it together – I hope you enjoy reading it.

Well, that's all for this month – next month, as if you didn't already know, features another cover mount cassette. This double A-side playable demo tape gives you a sneak preview of two of the biggest up-and-coming games. At only 25p extra, you'd be crazy to miss it!

Until the next full moon . . .

Steve Jarratt

STEVE JARRATT

REVIEWS

Goodies for JUNE

SMASHED!

HOT SHOTS 70% and over . . .

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ADVERTISERS INDEX

N·E·W·S



Chris and Tim Stamper, the mystery men behind Ultimate's success

ULTIMATE PLAY THE GAME AGAIN AND AGAIN AND AGAIN

The collected works of **Ultimate Play the Game**, one of the most consistently successful software houses ever, are set to be released in one massive package. The Ultimate compilation, which has been endorsed by CRASH, will include *Jetpac*, *Pssst*, *Atic Atac* (92%, Issue 1), *Lunar Jetman* (95%, Issue 1), *Cookie*, *Tranz-Am*, *Knight Lore* (94%, Issue 12), *Alien 8* (95%, Issue 15), *Nightshade* (91%, Issue 21), *Gunfright* (92%, Issue 25) and *Sabre Wulf* (unrateable CRASH Smash, Issue 6). This Rare gaming opportunity will be available in the shops sometime early in August at £12.99 on cassette and £14.99 on disk. Don't miss it!

NEW PRODUCTS FROM OLD SOFTIES

The programming language and utility specialists **HiSoft** have modified four of their Spectrum titles to run on the +3. *HiSoft BASIC* turns most of Spectrum BASIC, with one or two exceptions, into fast machine-code. *HiSoft C* is an integer-only one-pass compiler, with interactive line editor; *Devpac (the assembler/debugger) now assembles disk-to-disk and HiSoft Pascal*, a one pass compiler, supports all the features of Standard Pascal as well as extensions to allow low level access to the machine. They retail at £28.95, £29.00, £19.95 and £35.00 respectively and are available in shops or by mail from: HiSoft, *The Old School, Greenfield, Bedford, MK45 5DE.*

THE GOOD COMPANION

A new company, which claims to produce many original utility programs for the Spectrum, has been set up in Cumbria. Known as **Companion**, it also sells hardware, including blank cassettes in bulk, Spectrum components including ROMs, ULAs and all kinds of keyboard membranes. For further information see the advertisement due to be placed in the July issue of CRASH. The first five people to spend over £30 within a month of the publication of the advert, will receive an electronic push button telephone free. Companion can be contacted at *193 Brampton Road, Carlisle, Cumbria, CA3 9AX*

POWER TO THE PEOPLE

The Power House have launched a competition designed to find the games player of the year. The company are inviting the public to send in details of their highest scores on The Power House games. Entrants should send their name and address as well as photographic evidence of their score to Andy Blazdell, The Power House, *204 Worple Road, Wimbledon, London SW20 8PN* by October 10. Each game champion will receive 20 free games while 30 games plus a Sony personal stereo await the overall winner.

SIR CLIVE GOES TO OREGON

US marketing and distribution of Sir Clive Sinclair's portable Z88 computer has been placed firmly in the hands of an American company. **Diversified Foods**, which is based in Portland, Oregon, has set up a subsidiary company called **Sinclair Systems Inc**, designed to sell the computer nationwide. Sir Clive's firm has only a 25% stake in the new company. The deal was set in motion by Atari's founder, Nolan Bushnell, who had hoped to take on the Z88's US distribution himself. The Z88 will retail for $549 and is being marketed with the emphasis on the originality of the product rather than in terms of competition with other laptops.

RIBBON AND BLUES

Blue Ribbon's latest re-release is a sports special. The first of a series of *Take 3* compilations features *Steve Davis Snooker* (77%, Issue 12), a Rugby Union simulation and **CDS Software**'s *Pool* (77% Issue 6). The disk costs £9.99 and should be available soon.

CASCADING BACK

Gamebusters, the new budget label from **Cascade Games** kicks off with the re-release of their flight simulator *Ace* (81%, Issue 32). The game, which should be available in the shops now, retails at £2.99 on cassette and £4.99 on disk.

HOOK, LINE AND SINKER

Piranha

MacMillan Publishing have decided to close down their 18-month-old games label **Piranha**. Current turnover was not considered sufficient to justify further investment. Launched at the 1986 PCW show, Piranha was responsible for such releases as *Trap Door* (88%, Issue 33), *Strike Force Cobra* (83%, Issue 33) and Yogi Bear (62%, Issue 47). These programs and others have already been bought up by the budget label **Alternative**. At least the better games won't go down with the name.

EARTHLIGHT



Spectrum screen shots.

Even the safest mission can turn into a space nightmare...

As space fleet squad member Slaatn your mission seems like an almost boring routine until the moment warning lights glow on your instrument panel. In milli-seconds your ship is dragged away from the squadron by an alien magnetic force to land on a small moon, badly damaging your outer shield.

You are alone, your ship useless — your only hope is to eliminate the moon's transmitters and neutralise the force field. May sound simple but enemy droids and nasties patrol the moon's surface, their task — to keep the transmitters sending.

Get moonstruck with this amazing game from Peter Cooke bringing you fast, lunatic action and graphics that are simply out of this world!

For mail order please send your order and remittance (cheques payable to British Telecom plc or direct debit from Access/Visa card by stating card number and expiry date) to:- The Marketing Department, Telecomsoft, First Floor, 64-76 New Oxford Street, London WC1A 1PS.

Spectrum Cassette £7.95

Telecomsoft, First Floor, 64-76 New Oxford St, London WC1A 1PS.

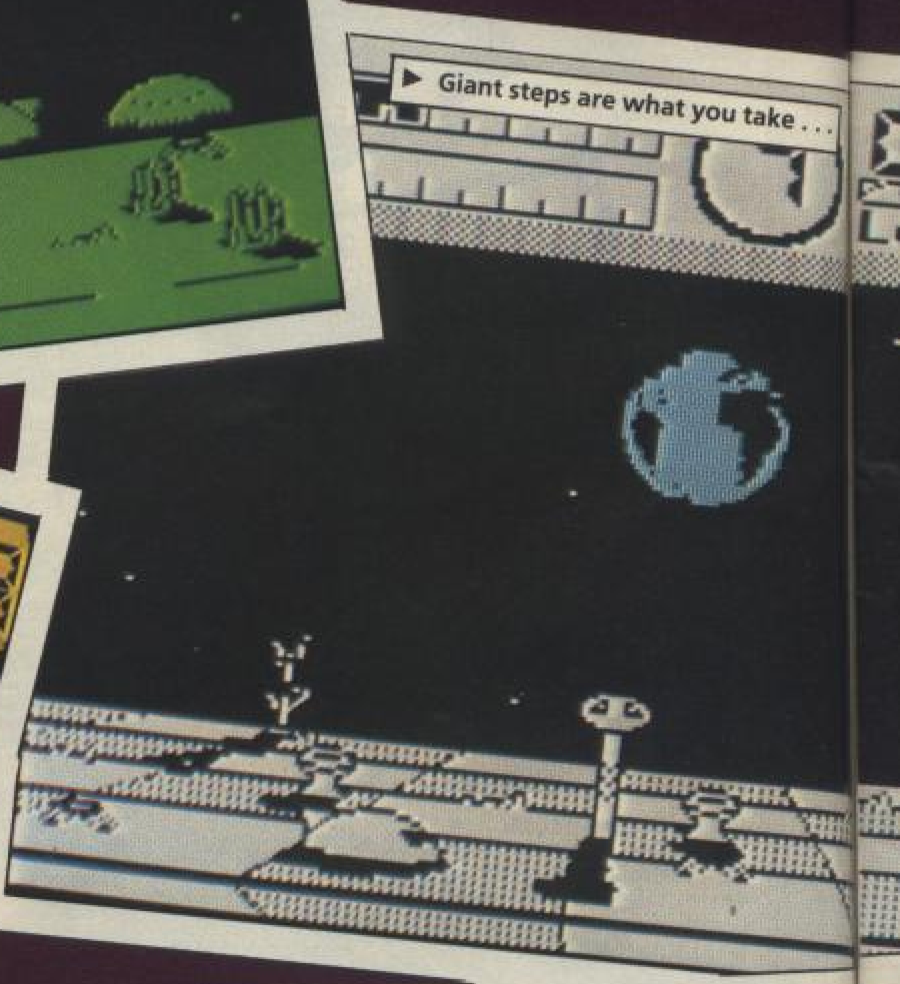
FIREBIRD

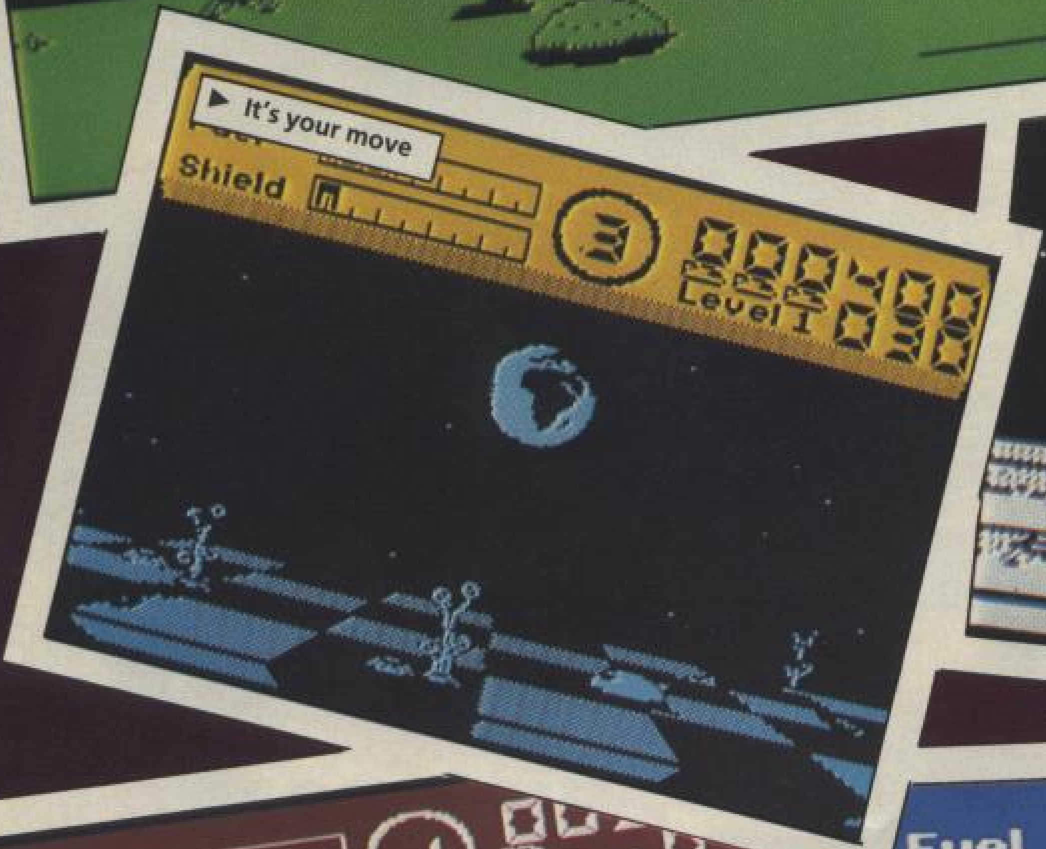
A LEGEND IN GAMES SOFTWARE

E•A



▶ Tackling the shoot 'em up from a completely new angle

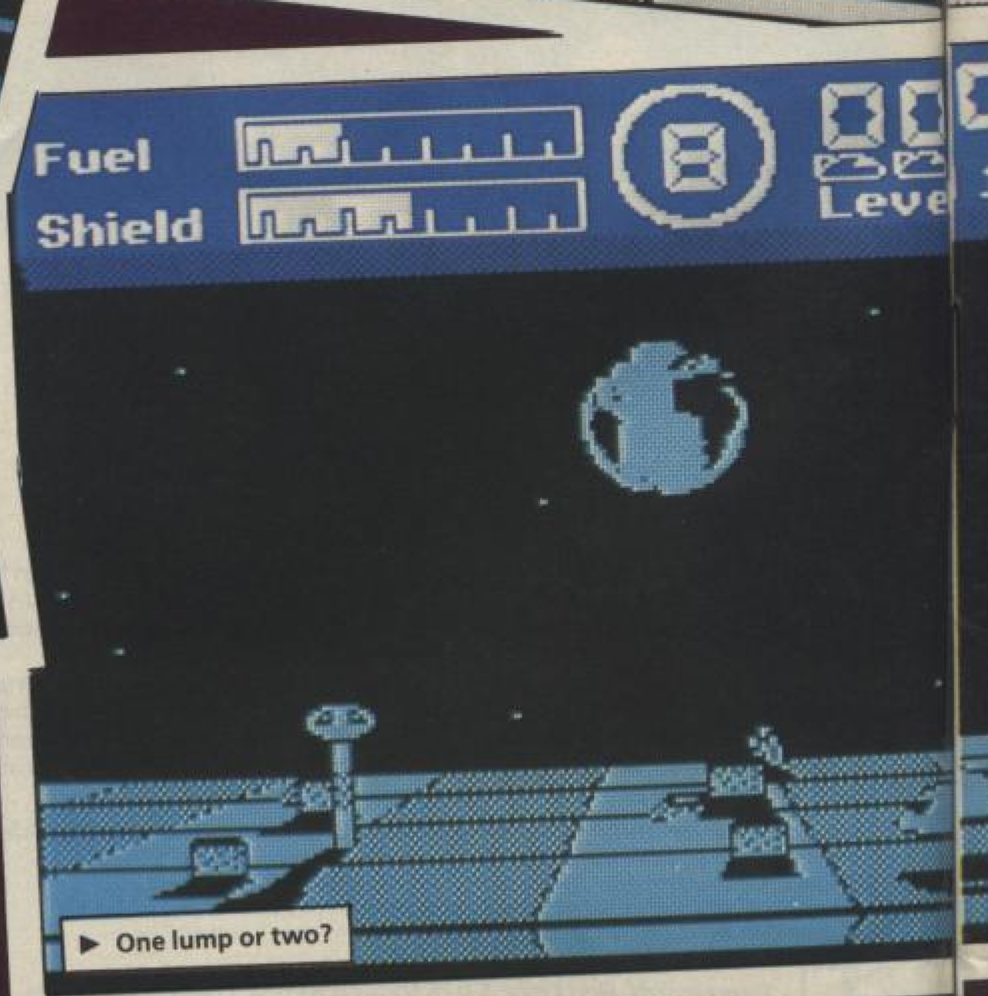

▶ Giant steps are what you take . . .



▶ It's your move



▶ Two zones done, but six to go



▶ One lump or two?

Producer: **Firebird**
Retail price: **£7.95**
Author: **Pete Cooke**

·A·R·T·H·L·I·G·H·T

A CRASH Smash

Slaatn, an ordinary alien from the planet Acturian, is on a routine intergalactic garbage collecting mission. Suddenly he's drawn off course by a strong sideways force emanating from Earth and is forced to make an unscheduled landing on the moon. Alone and friendless, Slaatn has only one chance of escape: he must neutralise the moon's box-like transmitters and eliminate the offending force field.

The mission takes place over four levels, each of which is divided into eight zones to be tackled in any order. The moon's 3-D, horizontally scrolling checkerboard surface consists of a series of regular squares pitted with craters, and marked by upright obstacles. The planet earth, rotating in distant space, is clearly visible, and bathes the moon in its eerie glow.

Slaatn has managed to steal a saucer-like alien craft which begins each round perched on a hemispherical platform base. Hovering above or skimming along the moon's surface and making use of occasional transporter platforms, Slaatn must collect a specified number of transmitters before returning to base. Alien saucers, spheres and podships do not hesitate to attack. However, Slaatn's ship is equipped with shields, fuel and missiles. Before entering each zone, the player can alter the ratio of these supplies; opting for more fuel, for example, means a reduction in the number of missiles carried.

Collision with aliens or obstacles damages shields, and staying too long on the planet's surface inevitably results in a loss of fuel. Should shields fail completely or fuel run, out one of three lives is lost. A status panel at the top of the screen shows shield and fuel panels – which flash when dangerously low – current zone, score, lives left, present level and missiles remaining.

Returning to base before all the transmitters have been collected gives an instant breakdown of Slaatn's performance so far, including the number of transmitters still to collect and the number and type of aliens still alive.

Once Slaatn has cleared all the zones and returned to base he is whisked onto the next level. The more transmitters he collects the more realistic the possibility of his escape from this dark and dangerous moon becomes.





" The comfortless surface of the moon bathed in a weird and eerie light is excellently portrayed in Pete Cooke's latest game. Parallax scrolling and realistically changing shadows create a polished and professional 3-D effect. The perspective is still not fine enough to make pinpointing of a craft's exact position possible, but on most levels the planet's grid-like surface avoids any problems of alignment. You simply line up your own craft with the enemy's to make sure of a direct hit. The presentation is faultless and the sound is atmospheric; a few carefully composed spot effects can be just as effective as a more complicated soundtrack. The controls of Slaatn's craft are smooth and generally quick to respond. Adventurous aliens should find plenty to keep them occupied. Negotiating a fleet of alien podships, while trying to collect a box and avoid a dangerous, deadly obstacle as you watch your fuel counter flashing low, requires more than the average measure of intergalactic spirit. Whether you're confident or just curious, it's one of those games you just shouldn't miss. "

KATI 90%

" Earthlight **is yet another one of Pete Cooke's masterpieces to put of your shelf, along with** Tau Ceti **and** Academy**. The game is excellently presented right from the start, and the graphics and sound (especially on the 128K) make it instantly addictive. Behind the game is a wickedly simple idea, but the way Pete has interpreted it makes it worthy of a Smash. The main scrolling area is seen 3-D, and each level holds it's own colours. But if you don't like the one's Pete has chosen then a quick trip to the CONFIGURE GAME option allows you to change them and other aspects of the game. The controls are confusing for a while because you have to increase and decrease the height of the ship as well as go forward, backwards, left and right. But after a couple of goes it all becomes easier and you can start and collect the cubes.** Earthlight **is much more than eight sectors of addictiveness – buy it today. "**

NICK 91%

" When I heard that Pete Cooke was doing a shoot 'em up I feared the worst. Was Pete Cooke finally selling out and copying other people's ideas? Certainly not! I couldn't have been more wrong. Earthlight **(like** Knight Lore **and** Manic Miner**) can easily make claims of 'breaking new barriers' and having 'innovative gameplay' – the whole perspective of the game is so original. The basic concept of the game follows** Uridium **very closely – albeit from a different angle – and contains the same addictive gameplay and detailed graphics of Hewson's space shoot 'em up. Pete Cooke has always been known for the true perspective of his games (**Ski Star 2000 **and** Micronaut One **are prime examples) but** Earthlight **is not only accurate it is also fast. Any old fool can fly around each zone at horrendous speeds firing aimlessly, but the real skill is knowing when to add that extra burst of speed and when to dodge the enemy or shoot it – EVERYTHING is limited and must be preserved! Mindless fools need not bother with** Earthlight **– it requires skill and restraint. It'll take much time and energy but is well worth persevering with. "**

PAUL 90%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: impressive 3-D effect with realistic shadows
Sound: superb 128K title tune. Good spot effects on both versions
Options: definable keys, colour/mono, sound on/off, selectable panel colour, three quarters view off/on, border FX off/on, separate 128K version
General rating: could (hopefully) set a whole new trend in shoot 'em ups

Presentation	95%
Graphics	87%
Playability	92%
Addictive qualities	91%
OVERALL	**90%**



STREET FIGHTER

Producer: **GO!**
Retail price: **£8.99 cassette, £12.99 disk**
Authors: **Tiertex from a Capcom coin-op**

Street fighting has taken on international status. Across the world candidates are lining up to take on Ryu, a skilled oriental fighter, in various forms of unorthodox urban combat.

The contest is set against horizontally scrolling backdrops from five different countries which are loaded individually.

Ryu has a catalogue of different moves at his disposal. Leaping, zero without losing too much of his own. The best of three timed bouts wins a match.

At the end of each level the player tests his strength in a bonus game. Ryu is seated before a pile of bricks where an energy bar at the top of the screen flashes rapidly between maximum and minimum strength. A press of the fire button halts the energy bar to determine the number of bricks Ryu can break.



jumping, punching, crouching and side-kicking, he attempts to reduce his opponent's strength to

PAUL

" There's no doubting the quality of Street Fighter's **large and detailed graphics, but when it comes to playability and addictiveness the game is sadly lacking in both aspects. The main fault for this lies with the poor animation on the characters and the dumb computer opponent. There are very few frames of animation and the computer opponent is easily beaten by constantly ducking and kicking – a very old method. There are a few variations in opponents but the basic gameplay characteristics need not be changed on each level for guaranteed success – thus quickly inducing a state of boredom at the repetitiveness of the game. At a pound under a tenner it doesn't represent very good value for money. "**

69%

KATI

" What there is of Street Fighter is enjoyable and well presented. The monochrome backdrops are finely drawn and detailed enough to create a distinctive international atmosphere. All the different challengers have their own distinguishing and humourous characteristics. Gameplay is smooth (except for some awkward scrolling) and initially very addictive – it's just that there isn't anywhere near enough of it. My third go got me to the fifth level; the game as a whole isn't likely to take anyone more than two or three hours to complete. Once you've sussed that it's best to crouch down and keep punching, none of the ten opponents present more than a passing challenge. The two-player option adds just one extra and fairly redundant match. All the ingredients of an excellent game are there – somehow GO! have managed to burn the cake. "

62%

NICK

" Yet another great Capcom arcade game comes to the Spectrum, and Street Fighter **has survived it s conversion quite well. The backgrounds are all excellently drawn and the various characters move around on-screen with all the elegance and might of real street fighters. The moves that you can use on your opponent are the same as in older games such as** Way Of The Exploding Fist **and the more recent** IK+ **but this doesn't mean that** Street Fighter **holds nothing new. The wide variety of enemies that challenge you are enough to keep any hard guy happy for an hour or two. If you're looking for a quick trip around the world beating people up, then look no further –** Street Fighter **is here. "**

82%

LAZER TAG

Producer: **GO!**
Retail price: **£8.99 cassette, £12.99 disk**
Authors: **Probe**

Fresh from its success as a light game, *Lazer Tag* makes its appearance in computerised form.

One or two alternating players take the part of a cadet undergoing rigorous instruction at the Lazer Tag training school. Training is divided into two disciplines: Shoot Out and Target. Both take place against the background of a vertically scrolling, futuristic practice arena.

In Shoot Out , 'tagger' opponents advance from all sides firing lazers. The player attempts to make his way through the complex within a given time limit, shooting as many of his opponents as possible.

The arena features spinning terminals which deflect the lazer and double or quadruple the beam

NICK

" Lazer Tag is an extremely plain game that holds nothing new – a few little nasties that look like garden gnomes shooting at you isn't my idea of fun. The whole play area is monochromatic which merely changes to red when you've been tagged. The majority of the graphics are simply made up of different types of shading and the tiny enemies and vehicles that run around on it only serve to make it look worse. The only way you can tell where you are on the screen is by looking for the lazer tagger with the flashing helmet, otherwise you look like the opponents! Coming from Probe, who also did Trantor The Last Storm Trooper, **this is a great disappointment. I'd stick to the real thing if I was you! "**

44%



PAUL

" Perhaps GO! should have renamed this Rubber Bullet – it seems to be closer to firing rubber projectiles than the sophisticated lazer system on which it's based. Lazer Tag **is no more than a monochromatic** Ikari Warriors **– albeit an above average one. The main section of the game is fun to play and mildly addictive, but the real skill is exercised on the target section, in which accuracy takes over from mayhem. Here lies a competitive and compelling test of skill and judgement.** Lazer Tag **is immediately addictive and enjoyable to play for a couple of hours (which cannot be said of most games nowadays) but whether it'll hold an attraction for more than a few weeks is another matter. "**

70%

KATI

" When they were first introduced, light games like Lazer Tag **came across as a comparatively original concept. In the form of a computer game none of these innovations really have much impact and** Lazer Tag **turns out to be a fairly standard shoot 'em up. The graphics are finely detailed but create no real sense of tension. The original** Lazer Tag **simulates the sound of a beating heart – had this been included it might have contributed to a more motivating atmosphere of suspense. Target practice is the only slightly unusual feature and even this only generates a small amount of curiosity. Otherwise** Lazer Tag **is carefully programmed, scrolls smoothly and plays quite well. You could do worse than this unexceptional, but competent tag 'em up. "**

60%



The player is permitted to lose up to three matches before he is knocked out of the contest and the game ends. If the two-player option has been selected, the winner of an initial match between Ryu and Ken goes forward to play all the other champions.

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: large characters with poor animation. Attractive backgrounds
Sound: mini-tunes on each level, with mediocre crunch effects
Options: multiload on/off, one or two players, selectable background colour
General rating: well converted, but too easy to be of any lasting interest

Presentation	80%
Graphics	73%
Playability	65%
Addictive qualities	60%
OVERALL	**69%**

when hit, and certain walls ricochet shots around the arena.

Target is designed to test shooting accuracy. The player is automatically transported through the arena and attempts to shoot as many taggers as possible. He controls the direction in which he fires but not the route taken through each room.

At the end of each practice session the player is given a rating: his skill determines the degree of promotion obtained.

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: poor on the first stage, but improve as you progress
Sound: average title tune and spot effects
Options: definable keys
General rating: nothing more than a simple shoot 'em up

Presentation	57%
Graphics	58%
Playability	60%
Addictive qualities	50%
OVERALL	**59%**

GUTZ

Producer: **Ocean/Special FX**
Retail price: **£7.95**
Authors: **Jim Bagley and Chas Davies**

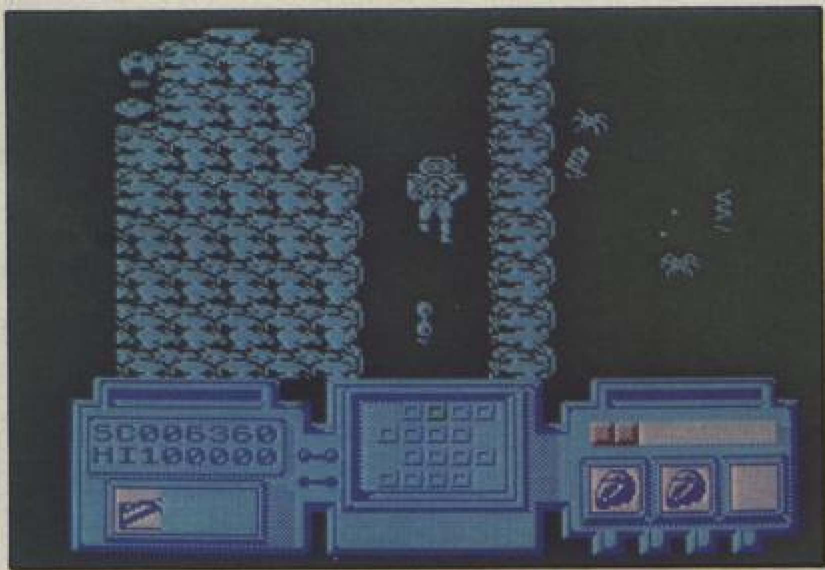
You've been swallowed up by a ten million tonne space being with an equally large appetite. This mega-monstrosity also has its greedy eye on Earth, so you have no choice but to try and escape by shutting down the body's major organs – otherwise your home planet is about to end life as an undignified midday snack.

The treacherous quest takes place over four levels, inside a vast four-way scrolling complex of interconnecting tubes. Each of the four major organs (kidneys, lungs, heart and brain) must be destroyed in turn. As they are each encased in a tough membrane, an appropriately powerful weapon needs to be assembled first, and its three parts are found scattered around different sectors of each level.

Antibodies attack from all sides shooting pellets. Contact depletes energy, and once it reaches zero one of four lives is lost. A variety of weapons are collected by moving over weapon holds hidden in the tissue walls.

Other bonus icons include spare helmets, for extra protection and crystals for increased fire-power. Keys enable you to open the Super Weapon door hidden inside each of the major organ rooms.

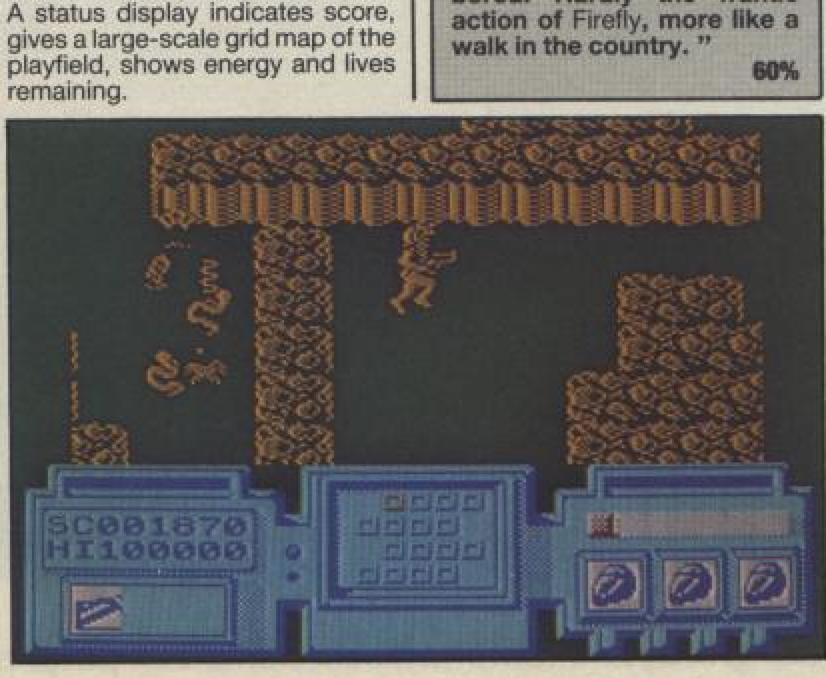
A map of the current quadrant can be called up via the keyboard. A status display indicates score, gives a large-scale grid map of the playfield, shows energy and lives remaining.



PAUL

" Gutz is all very well if you're one of those rambler types that enjoys walking thousands of miles through picturesque terrain, but when it comes to an addictive and compelling computer game, Special FX's latest sadly misses the mark. There's no addictive goal to aim for and no tough characters to overcome – just constant trogging around getting very, very bored. Hardly the frantic action of Firefly, more like a walk in the country. "

60%



NICK

" What a name! What a game! Gutz spoils Special FX's reputation, well in my mind at least. The graphics are all simply drawn and with monochromatic colour over the top of that, it's just a recipe for disaster. There are some options to make the game a bit more bearable like the option to select either sound effects or a great rapping tune, but other than that Gutz it a very basic game. There is no real objective behind it, just shoot all the little spiders, drainpipes and pot plants that flicker and jump around the screen. I wouldn't bother with Gutz if I was you, just because it has Special FX on the cover, it doesn't mean that it's a special game! "

57%

KATI

" Hurtling around the arterial passages of an intergalactic mega-being sounds pretty disgusting. However, if blood and gore is what you're after, Gutz is unlikely to match up to your wildest, most repulsive dreams. The network of complex tissue ducts turns out to be a very ordinary maze with borders that look as much like a privet hedge as a wall of cells. The insectoid antibodies pose an equally pathetic-looking threat. Having said that, Gutz has competent, if unexceptional graphics. The presentation is slick and the scrolling is smooth. It's just that the quest isn't particularly captivating. You spend ages wandering around in an aimless sort of fashion waiting for the fun to start. Gutz isn't a disaster – it's just not as nauseating or exciting as it claims to be. "

69%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: detailed characters and backgrounds, with little colour and limited animation
Sound: above average title tune
Options: tune or spot effects during game
General rating: a just above average attempt at a new type of arcade adventure

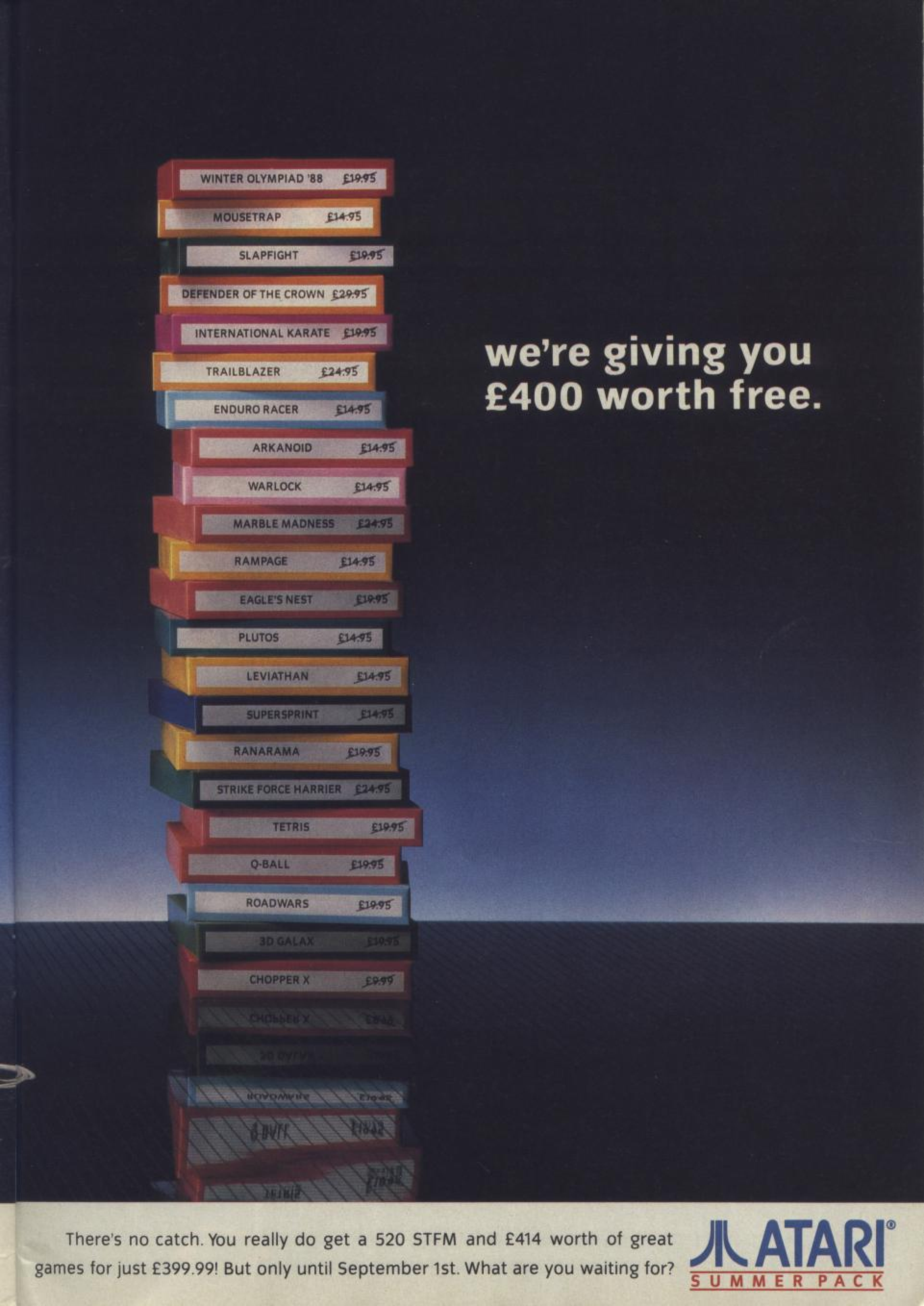
Presentation	79%
Graphics	60%
Playability	64%
Addictive qualities	61%
OVERALL	**62%**

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CROSSWIZE

Producer: **Firebird**
Retail price: **£7.95**
Authors: **Steve Wetherill and Colin Grunes**

Sidewize had you halting the invasion of nasty Darland Mutants in a shimmering shower of laser fire. Since then the galaxy has been pretty quiet – not a mutant uprising or intergalactic scuffle in sight. You're getting on with whatever mercenaries do in their spare time when suddenly the interstellar communilink bursts into life: the planet Luna is under attack from unidentified alien forces. You immediately rush to the shuttle dock, board your craft and enter the fray.

One or two alternating players may participate in the combat which takes place against a horizontally scrolling skyline of buildings, factories and Prawn hives. Alien formations attack from all directions, chimneys belch missiles and enemy bullets fly through the air. Collision with buildings is fatal and results in the loss of one of three lives.

Basic laser fire can be temporarily enhanced by moving over uniform weaponry installation icons which represent four different types of improvements of: bullet-fire, surround-fire, shield and smart bomb. Each weapon comes in two forms, weak and strong, and since all icons display the same symbol you can never be sure of picking an improvement. A colour-coded status display at the base of the screen lights up to show the type of weapon currently in use as well as its diminishing strength.

As the battle rages on, your character's energy decreases and he begins to slow down. Picking up energy pods restores strength, and a colour-coded energy meter indicates current status of health.

Play is divided into three multiloaded levels, each of which culminates in a confrontation with the huge tentacles of a mother alien. Dodge her moving arms, blast them to pieces and the Crosswize mission is one step nearer success.

PAUL

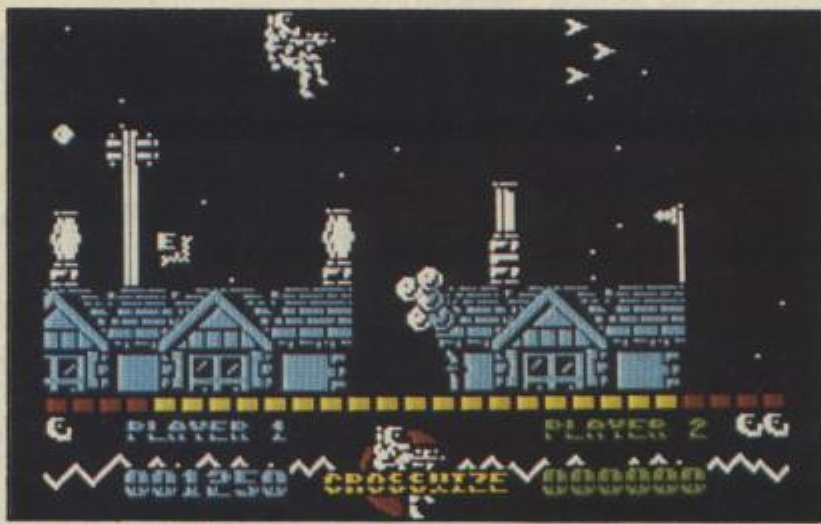
" Crosswize is a tremendous improvement over its predecessor, Sidewize. The graphics are very detailed and, unlike Sidewize, contain some attractive and colourful scenery. But, one major fault is that you can't turn and fire at the same time. Although this may sound petty, in certain situations it makes the game very annoying and almost unplayable. It's a pity to see the programmers making the game so hard – I fear that most people won't even get the chance to load the extra levels supplied on the tape, thus missing out on some great graphics and challenges. This isn't a game you can sail through: it requires great thought and a good memory. However, hardened arcade addicts will find all that they've been looking for. Worth the asking price. "

70%

NICK

" Play Crosswize and become cross-eyed! There's just so much going on that you can't keep track of everything! All you can do is cross your fingers and blast away. It's very similar to its predecessor Sidewize, but the scrolling scenery is much more interesting containing little green houses with chimney pots that fire bombs at you! The method of collecting more fire power is the same, but the chance of collecting the wrong icon adds spice to the process. As with Sidewize, Crosswize is basically just a difficult shoot 'em up with little else to it. I found the couple of lives you are given hardly enough to get anywhere, and this proves frustrating when you die and have to start afresh. However, there's plenty of playability packed into Crosswize and if you like mindless massacres then this is for you. "

70%



▶ You play Santa Claus delivering presents to the children . . . (Whoops) Oh, no you don't!

KATI

" Graphically Crosswize is a definite improvement over its predecessor, Sidewize (50%, Issue 44). Aliens, buildings, bullets and hero are clearly defined against a detailed and fairly colourful background. The control method however, takes some getting used to. Years of space peace have obviously taken their toll; your man is far less agile than he needs to be and frantic wiggling of the joystick meets with a slow, lethargic response. Turning is especially difficult; you can't change direction *and* fire at the same time. The size of the playing area doesn't help: hero and aliens are crowded on to a skyline already cramped by hazardous aerials and chimney pots. All too soon your space career comes to an untimely end in an undignified spray of pixels and some unimpressive sound effects. With a little perseverance your sprite becomes more manageable and against all odds play can get quite addictive. If you're looking for a tougher-than-average shoot 'em up this might just be the one. "

68%



▶ Like a phoenix rising from the ashes

▶ *Sidewize* was never this much fun!

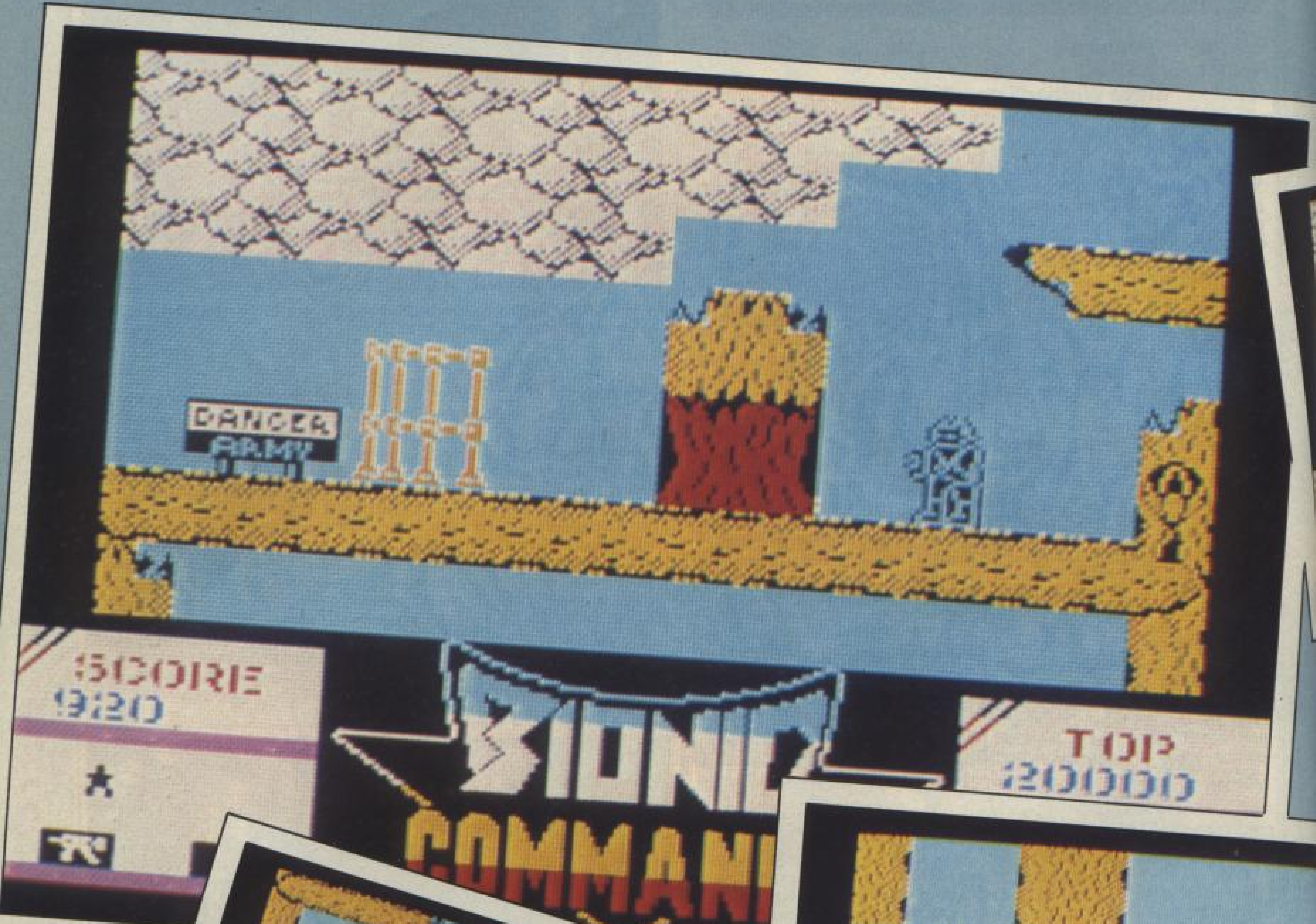


COMMENTS

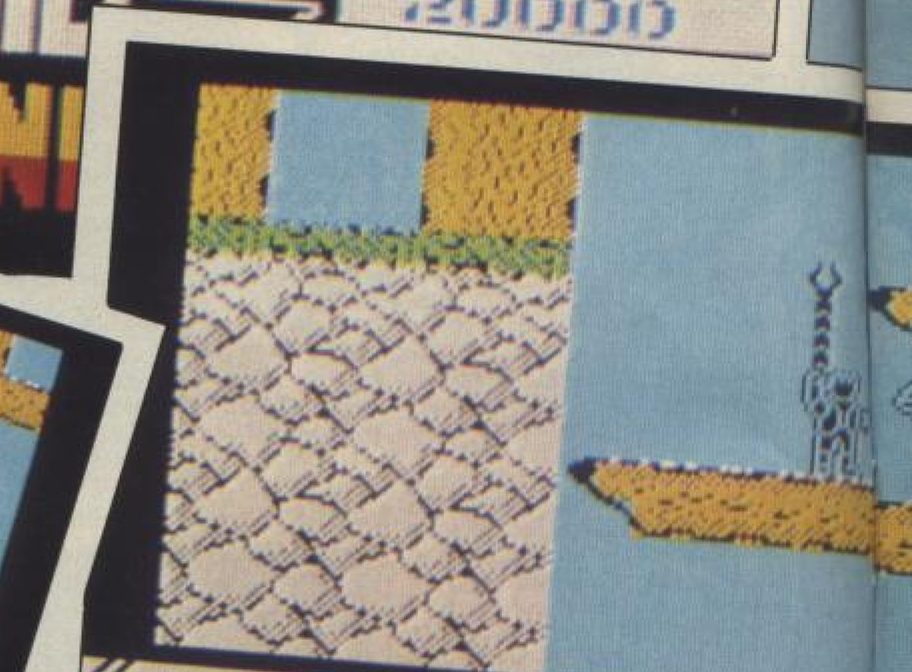
Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: attractive use of colour with detailed scenery, but the main character is far too large
Sound: unimpressive effects
Options: definable keys, one or two players
General rating: a successful sequel flawed by a small play area and annoying control

Presentation	67%
Graphics	68%
Playability	65%
Addictive qualities	74%
OVERALL	**69%**

B·I·O·N·I·C



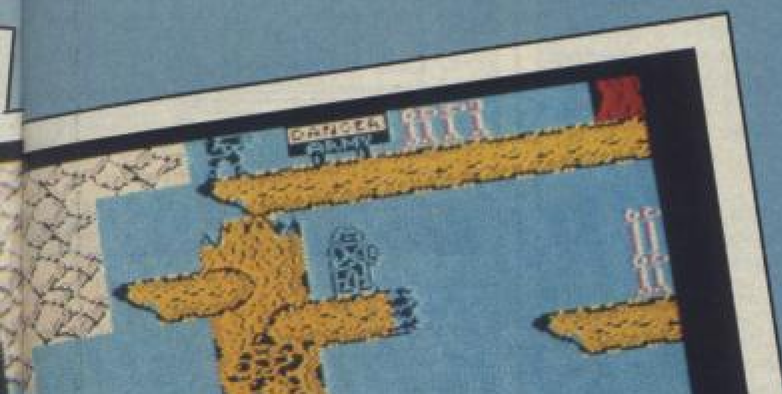




Producer: **GO!**
Retail price: **£8.99 cassette, £12.99 disk**
Authors: **Software Creations from a Capcom coin-op**

C·O·M·M·A·N·D·O

A CRASH Smash



Fresh from the arcades, our bionic commando is all set to make history on the Spectrum. Complete with his superhuman grappling arm, he must negotiate dangerous enemy territory in order to infiltrate the opposition's base and deactivate its missiles.

The mission takes place over five levels of four-way scrolling terrain. Each stage is timed and must be completed within 200 units. The environment, which ranges from the jungle, via a fort, a complex of pipes and control tower, to the missile centre itself, consists of a network of platforms patrolled by a host of vigilant enemy soldiers. The player parachutes into the forest and attempts to make his way up, along and across these platforms using his bionic arm – a telescopic extension with a grappling hook at the end. This clips on to nearby branches and enables the intrepid commando to swing gracefully from tree to tree.

Enemy soldiers can be struck with the all-purpose bionic arm or shot using a gun. Extra equipment (firepower or faster arm movement) is airlifted in and can be collected by shooting or grappling down the parachute from which it is suspended. Should he get shot before he has a chance to retaliate, or fall into a bottomless pit, the commando loses one of his four bionic lives.

Each level has its own particular hazards: killer bees and deadly plants in the jungle, missile-belching cannons in the fort, nasty green gremlins chewing away at the pipework and bomb-dropping helicopters in the control tower. A series of huge foot-stamping robots bars the way into the final level of confrontation.

A status strip at the base of the screen shows score, weapon presently being used, number of lives left, high score, current level and time remaining.



" At last, Bionic Commando **on the Spectrum! Yes that's right ladies and gents, those kind people at GO! have converted one of the best arcade games around onto your computer – and it's not that bad either! The graphics are excellently drawn, especially on higher levels where you have to dive under massive fists and dodge giant feet. Amazingly the characters don't merge with the background to produce a blind blur: you can actually see them! Each stage has something more to offer in the shape of extra things to do and tougher enemies to beat, and each one is as addictive as the last. The 128K music is just fantastic with different tunes cropping up all the time. This sets the mood for the game well, and for a change you don't have to load more stages as you progress. On the 48K however, there are just sound effects and the usual frustrating multiload system that most games seem to have these days.** Bionic Commando **is a thoroughly enjoyable game, miss it and you're mad! "**

NICK 92%

" Bionic Commando **is essentially a combination of platform game and shoot 'em up with a little exploration thrown in for good measure. What turns this mish-mash of ingredients into a glowing success is the concept of the bionic arm. Hurling your hook through the air and swinging with athletic poise from branch to branch is exhilarating, unusual and, above all, fun. Giant robots, killer bees, parachutes, choppers and fatal weeds ensure plenty of variety as you rush madly towards deactivation of the secret missile base. Each of the five timed levels is extremely challenging and designed to keep you going back for more. My only quibble regards the jerky scrolling; you can't always see ahead quite as far as you need to but in some ways this manages to contribute to the tension. Graphically,** Bionic Commando **is hardly spectacular but what it lacks in colour, it more than makes up for with its psychedelic 128K tune – it's different for every level and the best music I've ever heard on the Spectrum. Even without this extra bonus you have a highly addictive and playable game; try it and you'll buy it. "**

KATI 91%

" When I heard that GO! were going to transfer the massive arcade might of the Bionic Commandos **coin-op on to the Spectrum I laughed. But knock me over with a feather, those chaps at Software Creations** (Bubble Bobble) **have done a grand job. So it's no longer a two player game, who cares? Smart move on GO!'s part because EVERYONE will be wanting to get their hand on their new game. The best part of** Bionic Commando **has got to be the mechanical arm. Not only does it help you to reach out and avoid most confrontations, it also contains deadly fire power. Some may say the scrolling's a bit jerky, but that's only because it's terrifically fast – thus keeping the action coming at breakneck speed. With so much content you can't afford to miss GO!'s greatest game yet! "**

PAUL 92%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Sinclair, Kempston
Graphics: clever mix of colour and detail. Lots of variation
Sound: fantastic 128K throughout game. Atmospheric sound FX on 48K
Options: definable keys
General rating: the first successful conversion from the new GO!/Capcom deal. Let's hope it continues!

Presentation	84%
Graphics	88%
Playability	93%
Addictive qualities	92%
OVERALL	**92%**

STARRING CHARLIE CHAPLIN

Producer: **US Gold**
Retail price: **£8.99 cassette, £12.99 disk**
Authors: **Bubble Inc**

Scene One: After making a note of his starting balance, the prospective director chooses a script from the eight provided. Each one displays production costs and includes a short synopsis together with a list of actors and props available.

Cut to black and white set: Against a background of bars, city streets, drawing rooms and parks, a number of actors are busily acting their parts. Taking the role of Chaplin, the player attempts to turn the scene into an episode of slapstick comedy. How efficiently Chaplin twirls his cane, shrugs his shoulders, worships his sweetheart and beats up his rivals determines the film's success.

Pan to cutting room: Here the film can be paused or shown at twice normal speed. Dissatisfied directors can opt to re-shoot a scene any number of times but at an extra cost.

Opening Night: Once complete, the movie is shown to a cinema audience. The response of the critics, indicated by the tone of a *Variety* headline, determines how much money the film makes. A profit and loss sheet displays the financial fate of the movie. Make a loss and the director's film career is over; make a profit and he survives to make another Chaplin film.

PAUL

" Starring Charlie Chaplin **would be a fantastic game if only it had more variety. There's no doubting the quality of the graphics – they suit the Spectrum computer perfectly – and the sound in a silent film can hardly be inspirational. But all you have to do is knock people over – that's it! You'd have thought US Gold would given Chaplin more violent things to do – like banging doors in people's faces. The game requires no directing or financial skill at all – all you do is hit people! The more times you hit people, the more money you get. The game has so much potential it's a pity the idea hasn't been exploited to its full.** "

60%

KATI

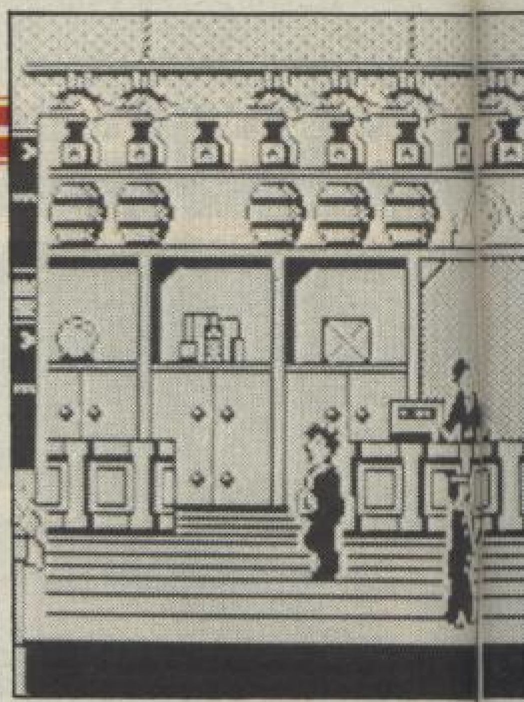
" The slapstick world of silent movies is particularly suited to the capabilities of the Spectrum and US Gold certainly exploit the possibilities. All the sets are finely detailed and the presentation of each film, from script to final showing, is faultless. Chaplin survives the translation into machine code particularly well, his characteristic walk being perfectly portrayed. Unfortunately the substance of the game doesn't match up to the high standard set by the graphics. Neither shooting nor editing provide much scope for variety. Chaplin's moves are very limited: all he can do to show affection for his sweetheart is twirl his cane, shrug his shoulders or punch her in the face. A little more attention to content and Chaplin might have starred in a completely different story. "

57%

NICK

" Starring Charlie Chaplin **makes a welcome change from the usual 'shoot the alien' or 'rescue the medieval monk'-type games that a lot of software companies have been churning out lately. The cartoon style characters are all well animated and Charlie swings his stick in a very convincing manner. According to the inlay the idea is to do as many whacky stunts as possible, but all I could seem to do was hit everyone! Mind you, I did make £10 profit – who said you couldn't make money in the film business! The game includes many neat touches, such as the curtain-opening sequence, but there just isn't enough to keep you occupied for long. It's a pity because** Starring Charlie Chaplin **had loads of potential.** "

63%



CYBERKNIGHTS

Producer: **CRL**
Retail price: **£7.95**
Authors: **R T Smith**

CRL's latest release comes from the author of highly successful wargames such as *Arnhem*, *Vulcan* and *Desert Rats*.

The player takes the part of a Cyberknight robot (either computer or custom-designed) in a mission to seek out and destroy ten computer controlled opponents. In two player mode, two Cyberknights battle against one another in a fight to the death. Although other robots are present, they form a significantly weaker challenge.

The flick-screen battle arena consists of a series of futuristic tunnels connected by gravity-neutralising lift shafts which allow temporary freedom of vertical movement. In two player mode the screen is split to display the position of both Cyberknights simultaneously.

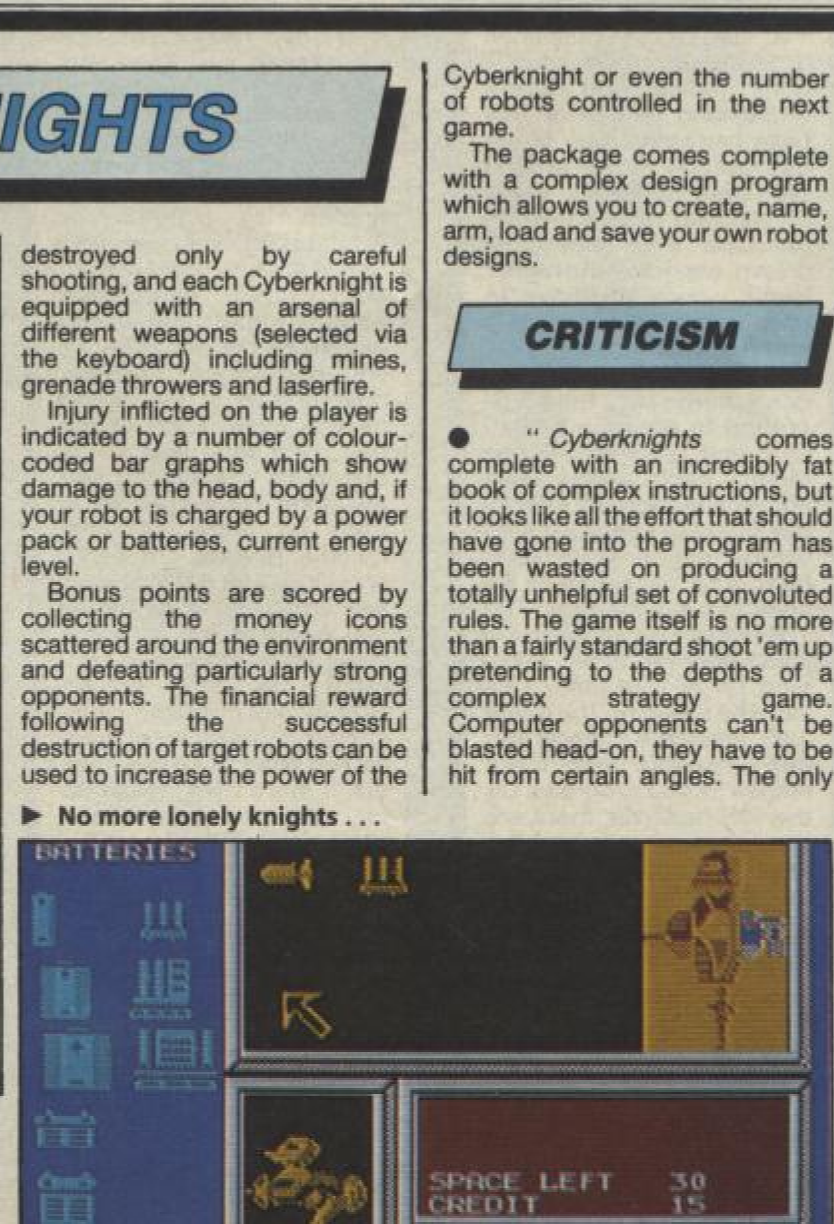
Computer controlled opponents prowl the corridors waiting to fire lasers and missiles at hostile intruders. These can be destroyed only by careful shooting, and each Cyberknight is equipped with an arsenal of different weapons (selected via the keyboard) including mines, grenade throwers and laserfire.

Injury inflicted on the player is indicated by a number of colour-coded bar graphs which show damage to the head, body and, if your robot is charged by a power pack or batteries, current energy level.

Bonus points are scored by collecting the money icons scattered around the environment and defeating particularly strong opponents. The financial reward following the successful destruction of target robots can be used to increase the power of the Cyberknight or even the number of robots controlled in the next game.

The package comes complete with a complex design program which allows you to create, name, arm, load and save your own robot designs.

▶ **No more lonely knights . . .**

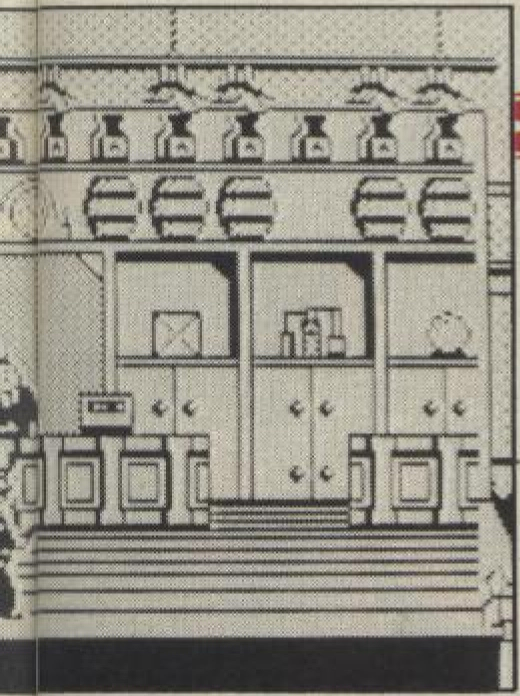


CRITICISM

● " *Cyberknights* comes complete with an incredibly fat book of complex instructions, but it looks like all the effort that should have gone into the program has been wasted on producing a totally unhelpful set of convoluted rules. The game itself is no more than a fairly standard shoot 'em up pretending to the depths of a complex strategy game. Computer opponents can't be blasted head-on, they have to be hit from certain angles. The only elements this adds to the game are boredom (at best) and extreme frustration (at worst); blasting at extremely resilient opponents has very little to recommend it. Feeble gameplay can't be redeemed by the simplistic (if colourful) graphics or the insignificant sound effects. Even with a designer programme *Cyberknights* doesn't have much to offer. "
KATI **40%**

● **" The instructions for** Cyberknights **are a joke. Just to prove where the programmer's real interests lie the booklet contains more pages explaining the use of the superfluous design program than the actual game itself – whereas surely a player would spend more time playing the game than using R T Smith's beautiful design program. The game itself is very simple and unaddictive, requiring very little thought. The constant sliding about (or standing still) and blasting hell out of another dopey robot is hardly compelling. The basic concept could create little more than the programmer has produced. Such a tedious and tiresome game certainly isn't worth £7.95. "**
PAUL **35%**

● *" How can CRL charge £7.95 for this? The game on its own isn't*



COMMENTS

Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: totally black and white. The detailed characters and backgrounds make all the scenes atmospheric
Sound: a few very simple spot effects
Options: choice of eight scripts (levels of difficulty)
General rating: a game with so much potential that has been ruined by the lack of things to do

Presentation	80%
Graphics	68%
Playability	62%
Addictive qualities	55%
OVERALL	**60%**

worthy of a budget price tag. The graphics are amateurish and colourless, and the only detail that has been put into the game is on the Cyberknights *logo – and that looks overdone. There's no tune to be found in the game – just a sound effect or two when you fire. So, it must be the design program on the other side of the tape which boosts up the price; but once you load it you realise that this is also a waste of time! Don't waste your money on* Cyberknights, *you'll just be very disappointed. "*
NICK **38%**

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: poorly defined and lacking colour
Sound: no tune with limited sound effects
Options: definable keys. Design programme on Side B
General rating: a game concentrating more on the design program than the actual game itself

Presentation	48%
Graphics	43%
Playability	40%
Addictive qualities	33%
OVERALL	**38%**

FREEDOM FIGHTER

Producer: **The Power House**
Retail price: **£1.99**
Author: **Jon Paul Eldridge**

All was peace and calm on the surface of your tranquil planet – until the evening sky turned scarlet with the lights of enemy ships. You rush to the spaceport and take to the skies in the people's only weapon – an advanced laser equipped spacecraft known as the Freedom Fighter.

Combat takes place in deep space against a vertically scrolling background of stars. Waves of aliens swoop down firing a hail of fatal bullets. Contact with either results in the immediate loss of one of three lives. As play progresses, the enemy releases concussion bombs which make their way slowly down the screen. The resulting explosion destroys the Freedom Fighter, regardless of its position on the screen. Collection automatically activates disarmament of each bomb.

In the wake of each group of alien craft flies a missile-belching mothership. To destroy it and gain an extra life, persistent volleys of laser fire are required. The sky clears temporarily and the fighter flies on into space, one level closer to his ultimate goal: the preservation of a serene and peaceful world.

CRITICISM

● " The most impressive aspect of *Freedom Fighter* is its title screen. A finely drawn portrait of the hero promises an exciting and possibly sophisticated game. A single press of the fire button and all your illusions crumble. Tiny multi-coloured diamonds pass for space invaders, purple blotches impersonate missile fire, and supposedly fatal concussion bombs sputter and die in an anticlimactic fizzle of flame. Collision detection is less than accurate and your powerful laser dribbles tiny spurts of feeble ammunition. With such limited weapons, poor playability, and primitive graphics there's absolutely no compulsion to play on. Avoid. "
KATI **20%**

● **" How could anyone in their right mind ever purchase the rights to publish such tommyrot? The Power House are supposed to be relaunching their image and so on but** Freedom Fighter **does nothing to improve their image in the market place. How can anyone be expected to respect a company that constantly produces below average software?** Freedom Fighter **is another in the long list of games with poor graphics, terrible use of colour and no playability. The collision detection is absolutely appalling – character collision, not pixel. If only the programmer had spent as long on the game as he did drawing his self-portrait on the title screen we might have had a fun little game. "**
PAUL **18%**

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Kempston
Graphics: very small and basic – bad use of colour
Sound: short synthesised tunes and effects
General rating: a poor game lacking in any addictive or playable qualities

Presentation	45%
Graphics	16%
Playability	27%
Addictive qualities	15%
OVERALL	**19%**

► **Haven't we seen this somewhere before?**



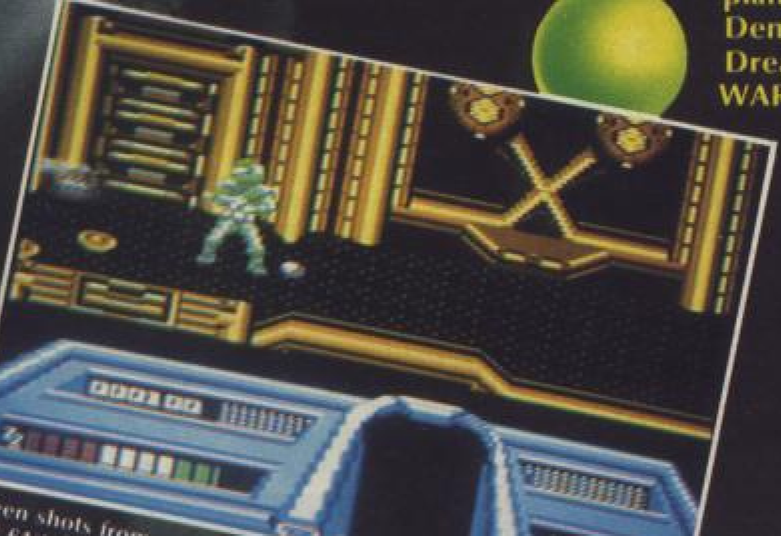
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Screen shots from CBM 64/128 version.





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LLOYD MANGRAM'S FORUM



Unfortunately, this month's FORUM has had to be squeezed somewhat to make room for the unusually large amount of features and specials. Still, rather than take up any more space with my ramblings, on with the show . . .

SPECTRUM R.I.P.?

Dear Lloyd
I'm writing in defence of the 16-bits, first in reply to Nigel Parmer's drivel which took up half a page of CRASH, issue 51. He obviously cannot see that technology has moved on leaving him behind; not only does he compare 16-bit computers with 8-bit ones where 8-bits have no chance, but also suggests that you keep your Spectrum so you can play bug-ridden games like *Match Day II* with poor sound and graphics. Don't worry Nigel, your padded cell will be nice and cosy for you when you come back in your jacket with those men in white coats.

And as for you Lloyd, 'Most 16-bit games play like a brick' (I've never seen a brick play, maybe I saw one playing darts with Nigel in his padded cell once).

First, let's look at the 16-bit software industry compared with 8-bit. The 16-bit industry is in the same state as the 8-bit was, two to three years ago (and accordingly, look how much older the Spectrum is now). As the user base grows so will the style of the games, progressively improving all the time (things like graphics, sound and PLAYABILITY). So just wait two to three years and compare the industries then. I think I know which will be the better.

I'm afraid the Spectrum has come to the end of its life. It's rather like a car: after so long it gets worn out and becomes knackered, so you get rid of it and buy a new one. So throw away the 8-bits and get a 16-bit. I'll be glad to see the back of my Spectrum.

I know I won't get the last word, as you will attack my letter at the end with your biased comments making it sound like the sun shines out of the Spectrum's speaker. Face it – 16-bit NOW RULES.
Matthew Wakley, Devon

When speaking of 16-bit games 'playing like a brick', I did not mean to be taken so literally. If you wish me to use plain English then I can only state that of the many 16-bit games I have played, the best of the bunch is still only comparable in playability with the best of the current 8-bit games.

I do agree with you about future events, although I have no reservations in restating my opinions that, at the present moment, the decision to upgrade to a 16-bit machine, simply discarding your old 8-bit, should not be taken lightly; frequently, the purchase of a new car is an economical necessity, but you wouldn't throw a working vintage car away just because it was old . . . Besides which, our sister mag, THE GAMES MACHINE (Issue 7), carries an article firmly suggesting the Spectrum's days are hardly numbered yet.
LM

DISKORDANT PRICING

Dear Lloyd
Firstly, before I start whingeing, I'd like to commend software companies such as Ocean, Gremlin Graphics, US Gold, Cascade and, to a lesser extent, Telecomsoft, Elite, Digital Integration, Incentive and Hewson on taking the initiative in the +3



games market.

But, having had a +3 since Christmas, I still haven't bought a game on disk. Why? Because of the price of disk software! Most disk games for the +3 retail at around £14.95 whilst the tape equivalent costs around £8. This is the reason why I'm still buying tape games.

I don't wholly blame the software firms for the exorbitant disk prices – Amstrad called the leading leisure software publishers to a special conference, believing that disk software could be reduced to under £10, thus increasing the sales of the +3. Many software houses have made a cautious approach to Spectrum disk software as there isn't yet a large enough user base. So surely Amstrad itself should take the first step in increasing +3 sales by reducing the price of the machine. Then, with a larger market, software companies could bring down software prices (perhaps to the magical figure of £9.95?). I reckon that disk software could come down to £12 or £13 now, since Mr Alexander of Virgin Games said of the price of software 'The additional manufacturing cost is £1.58. If we fell in line with what Amstrad is suggesting then we'd make 80 pence per unit less. The price point is difficult until disk prices come down'.

At the present moment though, how can a £1.58 increase warrant a £7 retail increase? I rest my case.

Please could CRASH include a monthly +3 round-up which tells us of recently released disk games, forthcoming releases and the enhancements the disk has over the tape games.

Philip Wynn, Bedfordshire

I must agree that the differences in production and retail costs of +3 disks does seem to smack of greed on the part of software wholesalers. I am informed that the disk duplication costs are higher than for tape-based games, but even so, the additional retail prices do appear unjustified.

At a recent conference, Alan Sugar called for all the major software houses to lower the retail prices of their disk software. Worried that their profit margins would be drastically reduced, their response was to ask Amstrad to lower the price of blank disks; neither side acquiesced and a stalemate is in force. I'm afraid that until one party makes a solid move, it would appear that the only people who are losing out on the situation are the customers.

LM

FOLLOWING THE BREWSTER TRAIL

Dear Lloyd

I feel that as both an adventure author and player I must put quill to parchment and write a note to your FORUM which usually deals with arcade fans.

I must point out it is not my intent to offend or to sound over-cynical but I must speak as I feel and indeed in your reply to the letter in the April CRASH you offended me – a humble adventure author. In the said reply you made homegrown software houses sound like a bad risk, when we care for our customers and write for love not money. The fact that you said you would have to refund a customer if he had a complaint against a reviewed game is, I feel, rubbish. I mean, if you look at the reasons you gave then that means you would also have to refund customers of Romantic Robot, Spectrum +3 and a host of arcade games. I know the above is going a little too far but if you maintain this new policy of not reviewing homegrown adventures (the majority of the market) then you will lose yet another reader.

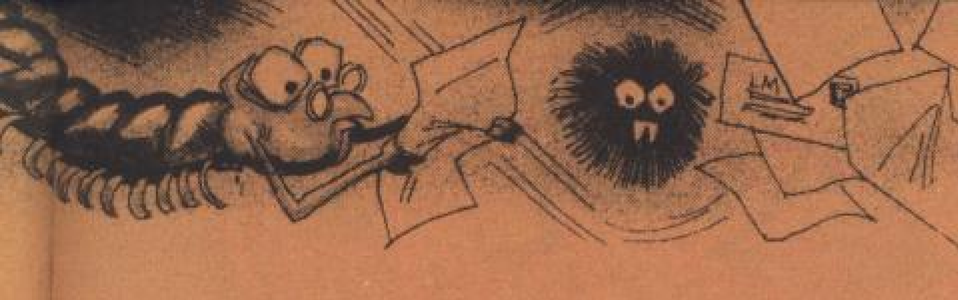
And now for something completely different: since good old Derek Brewster left (a man who knew his adventures), your adventure content has diminished and even *Sinclair User*'s adventure page is superior to yours. The April issue was no exception, it now looks like the once-inferior helpline in ZZAP!64.

Come on, we adventurers are not such a small minority that you can afford to ignore us. I know it may take a while to settle down after Derek's departure which will be missed, so I'm going to give another three issues before I cancel CRASH.

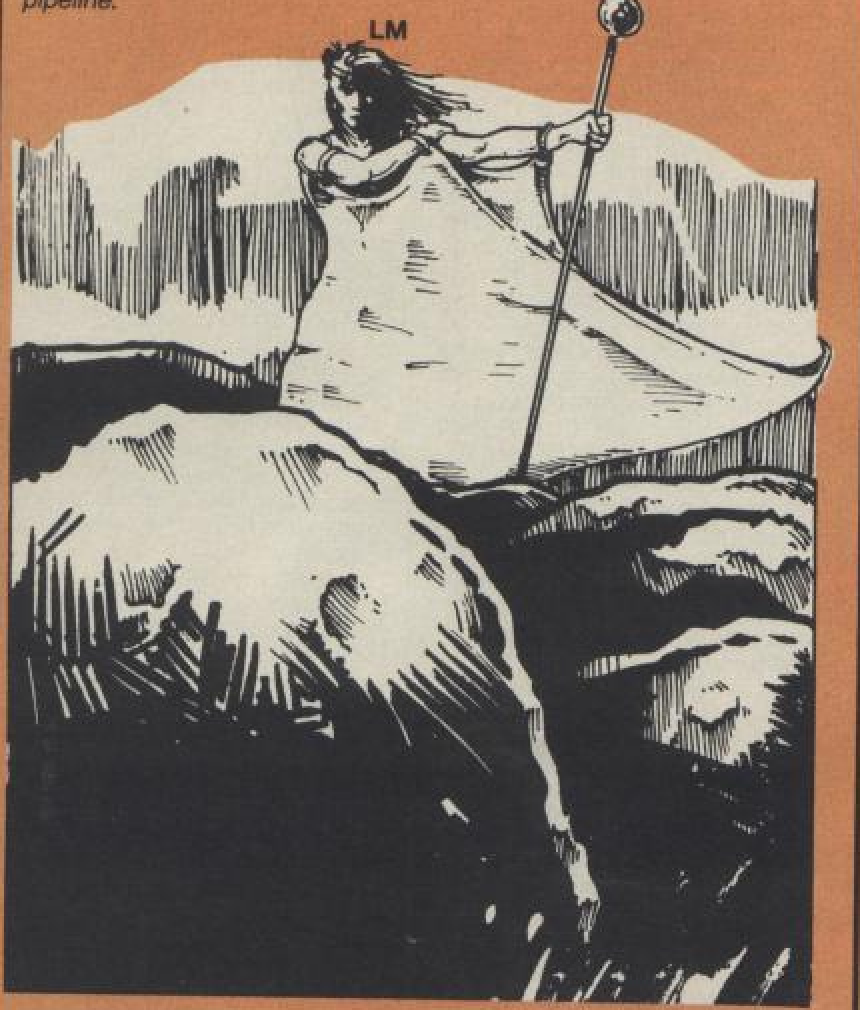
You will be missed.

GM Dobbs, Nr Porth

As stated in the reply to Simon McGregor's letter in Issue 51, the legalities involved in reviewing homegrown adventures are correct. But never fear: since the arrival of Samara, the number of homegrown adventure reviews is once again on the increase. Indeed this issue's ADVENTURE TRAIL is back up to four pages in length, and further changes, both



in size and content, are in the pipeline.



BACK TO THE PRESENT

Dear Lloyd
So you have now reached issue 50, and I'm sure that since you have been into computers since 1984 you all think that you're computer veterans and know it all. You may be surprised to hear that I have been a keen computer person since 1980. I learned to program on the ZX81 (yes, people did actually program their computers in those days rather than just bashing their keyboards to death) and have since had not inconsiderable experience in the programming and use of various computers, computer controlled scientific equipment and computer languages. 'So what?' I hear you exclaim, 'This is only a magazine for hobbyists'. Fine, fair enough. It's just that after reading YOUR self-glamorisingly cynical reply to Peter Hoar's truthful and well-written letter, I assumed that you must be a 'bloomin' arrogant scientist' like myself, but I suspect that this is probably not the case. I would like to know however, what gives you the right to talk back to your correspondents as you did to Mr Hoar in Issue 50. The points he made are perfectly valid. For example:
1) CRASH, whether you like it or not, is a catalogue. How can you describe a magazine which gives information on new software as anything else, after all, at least 75% of CRASH is devoted to reviews.
2) £1.95 was a rip-off for the Christmas edition. To say that it is bigger 'to read over the holidays' is pathetic! Who wants to read numerous covers of past editions of CRASH? (Oh, yes I forgot, it's teaching people about the old days!)
3) A sizeable number of CRASH Smashed software has proven to be rubbish. *Matchday II* is almost identical to *Matchday I*, and as for *Driller*, well I don't know about brilliant new graphics techniques, I remember very similar ones being used in a Psion program called *Vu-3D* in 1983 (the old days again).

A very large proportion of the software being released at present (and during the past year or two) has been garbage. Admittedly your reviews declare virtually every release a classic, but even your reviews are not terribly informative for example 'The graphics are mostly colourful and detailed . . . ' as one of your *Platoon* reviewers said. What the hell is 'mostly colourful' supposed to mean? Come on lads, try to use the old CSE English (Sorry, I mean GCSE, I'm thinking of the old days!).

So all in all I don't think you are perfect by any means, just like the rest of us. So when a member of your vast readership writes in as Mr Hoar did in issue 50 you don't really have any right to sneer and snipe as you did. I remind you that your readers effectively pay your wages, and incidentally, the customer should always be right. (Blimey! what an old fashioned



attitude!) Old fashioned yes. Wrong no.
S Moore, Bristol, Avon

It would seem that both Mr Hoar's letter and its reply has sparked off yet another controversy, judging by many of this month's letters. The responses to the points raised by that letter still hold true and although somewhat terse, were written in fairer tone than the damning letter itself.

The comparison of Driller's moving, filled-in 3-D graphics to a single, static, filled in 3-D graphic in Vu-3D is like comparing the Lascaux cave paintings to the work of Disney. And as to the disagreement with reviewers views, I can only repeat (yet again) that they are personal opinions and not meant to be taken as gospel. The short comments in evidence a few issues ago have now been considerably altered, as can be seen by this and last months' offerings.

Further, attempting to prove a point by using inaccurate information (CRASH certainly does not devote 75% of its pages to reviews) only undermines all your arguments.
LM

THE UNBEARABLE LONGNESS OF WAITING

Dear Lloyd
I am writing concerning the distribution of the Newsfield magazines, and how long it takes certain shops to get copies, especially of CRASH. I have CRASH ordered from my local village newsagent and find that sometimes it is in the shop almost one week later than the date shown in the previous issue of CRASH. Take this month for instance (the April issue). This was due in the shops on March 31. On Saturday March 26, I went to Brighton and visited the Virgin Megastore. In the computer games department I noticed about 20 copies of the CRASH April, but I did not have enough money to buy it. This was a whole five days before that issue was due to hit the shops. On March 31, I went to the local newsagent to get my copy of CRASH only to find that it was not there. I tried again on Friday April 1, then Saturday and even Bank Holiday Monday, but it was the same story. Also on these days, the big High Street stores such as WH Smith and Martins did not have it in. As I write, it is Monday April 11 and I still have not got my CRASH. If I get it on Tuesday then it will be five days late – as many days as it was early at Virgin.

What I want to know is why is it that big chainstores such as Virgin are given priority of delivery over a small independent newsagent? Of course the answer is relatively obvious: Virgin gets its CRASHes before time because they sell more copies and you get a larger revenue than the small independent shops that do not sell as many magazines.

Please do not see this letter as being critical of CRASH, but more of a criticism of Comag who distribute your mags.
Robert Lunn, West Sussex

Not one single outlet is given priority over any other, Robert; all copies of an issue are delivered from the printer to the wholesalers on the same day throughout the country. Virgin deal direct from the same warehouse. It is a question, then, of the efficiency of local wholesalers in delivering their stock to their retailers, who include your small independent newsagent. As we know, not all wholesalers are as efficient as others. You should certainly complain to your newsagent, even his wholesaler, if he will tell you who that is. Finally, I can pass on your letter to Comag, who will be as concerned as you about the lateness of CRASH in your local shop. A simpler answer might be to take out a subscription to CRASH, which is both more economical and also more reliable; many subscribers get their copies of CRASH the day after it's printed!
LM

NEVER MIND THE WIDTH, FEEL THE QUALITY

Dear Lloyd
What has happened to CRASH? I started buying it regularly at the beginning of 1986, and watched each month as it grew into a world power, shrugging aside the feeble opposition to reach the pinnacle of excellence.

Yes, that mouthful does contain a touch of nostalgia. Suddenly we're now paying £1.25 for a 100-page magazine. Half of this is advertisements, leaving very little reading material indeed. Where are the six-page FORUMS, eight-page ADVENTURE TRAILS and, come to that, what happened to PBM and FRONTLINE in Issue 52?

Certainly colour and general polish has improved but surely an interesting feature-filled magazine is more important than this. CRASH can be compared to the 16-bit market: a glossy, attractive veneer hiding an unstimulating product.

I can sympathise with money problems, because I now have one – which magazine to buy. CRASH is not offering value for money any more; I can have a better read elsewhere.

Actually I am Still buying CRASH because no other magazine offers such an excellent review system (it HAS improved!) – or Jetman! Also I enjoyed the CRASH history, which was well written (and drawn) and interesting.

Here's hoping that Jetman doesn't follow PBM and FRONTLINE.
Michael Batt, Cardiff

Now for a start, Michael, there has never been a CRASH where 50% of the pages are adverts – never! The usual ration is more like 25% ads, 75% editorial. Go on, check back and count up, please!

In fact, if it is one of those months where there is less-than-usual advertisements, and to a degree, a diminished number of games arriving for review, CRASH does diminish in size. However, I think you'll agree that this month's offering – 116 pages plus a FREE 16-page full colour arcade booklet – does offer quite substantial value for money.

Issue 52's POSTMARK and FRONTLINE features were not included because of differing reasons: Philippa has had a deficit of games to review of late (a situation that we hope is only temporary) and rather than include some personal philosophising or general overview of this pastime, the editor felt that the space could be more usefully used on a different feature. Brendan Kavanagh was in the process of moving home and being of no-fixed-abode, was unable to write his column! PBM is featured this month but, and again for the same reasons, FRONTLINE has had to bow out in favour of other features which were queueing up at CRASH's door! In fact, this issue includes one feature, one new regular and the CRASH COURSE together with seven regular columns plus news of the PC Art Show, and a taste of FEAR . . .

*That's all from this month's slightly smaller FORUM. Next month it should be back up to full size, bulging with rantings, ravings and general items of discourse and discord. If you have anything you want to get off your chest, write to **LLOYD MANGRAM, CRASH FORUM, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE, SY8 1DB. You could find yourself the lucky recipient of a £30 software voucher!***



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FIGHTIN

Known only to Spectrum owners through their first releases, *Gunship, F15 Strike Eagle* and *Silent Service,* MicroProse are something of an unknown quantity. CRASH visited their UK headquarters for some inside information.

In the summer of 1982, Sid Meier, systems analyst, and Bill Stealey, US Air Force Academy graduate, met at a company meeting in the MGM Grand hotel in Las Vegas. As they both had a keen interest in flying, the two hit it off and were soon challenging each other in aerial combat on a video game called *The Red Baron*; the former fighter-pilot lost! The same Red baron machine now sits in a corner of their Product Development department in Hunt Valley, Maryland: a present from the employees to the two co-founders of MicroProse Inc.

From their early friendship, a huge international company has grown: there are MicroProse offices in England, France and Japan plus a newly-opened site in Germany. The UK sector is directed from the Tetbury offices in Gloucestershire. Nestling in the centre of this historic market town, MicroProse UK looks decidedly out of place; a red banner of foot-high letters across the large glass frontage emphasises the contrast.

In addition to UK operations, 40% of their world wide transactions are controlled from here. The site includes a playtesting section, a comprehensive computer-controlled telesales department and a 20,000 square foot warehouse to back up their distribution service, which shifted over a million units last year.

Although they are the heads of a large international company, Bill Stealey and Sid Meier still play important roles in the production of each MicroProse game. Both are heavily involved in design and even playtesting. Bill holds a product development meeting three times a week and plays their games for around two hours every night. It is not unknown for him to cancel a project if he does not feel that it is up to their usual standards; only a few months ago, a space trading/combat simulator was canned after two years' development work and a limited advertising campaign in America!

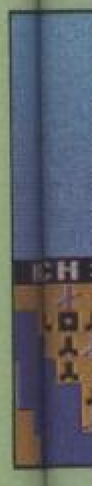
▶ **MicroProse UK – Tetbury**





▶ *Gunship*

"*Gunship* cost four million dollars and took over 17 man years to develop . . ."



▶ **Two of MicroProse's in-house art department, displaying the latest artwork for *Red Storm Rising***



NG FIT



"MicroProse promise support for the Spectrum for at least the next two years . . ."

► F-15 Strike Eagle



"*Silent Service* deals with attacks on Japanese shipping, yet this simulation is one of our biggest exports to Japan."





► One or two of the Microprose games stored in their 20,000 sq ft warehouse

Although the majority of their products are developed in America, MicroProse have embarked on an extensive expansion programme in Europe. They distribute the Suncom range of joysticks and have recently joined forces with Origin Systems in order to market their entire range of fantasy and role-playing software in Europe, including the *Ultima* series. The American label Cosmi is also to come under the MicroProse banner, and while MicroProse will continue to distribute new American software, they are also looking for quality Japanese products to sell.

The American section has recently taken on the services of Gene Lipman – the founding President of Atari – who has strong coin-op links. Gene is the Vice-President of special projects, and it is rumoured within the industry that this is the first step on the road to coin-op production. They are also continuing research into CD ROM.

Closer to home, MicroProse promise support for the Spectrum for at least the next two years – that's how long some of their projects take to prepare! They are also behind the +3; all their current and forthcoming products are to be released on three-inch disk.

1,000,000+

The success of Microprose products – over one million multi-format copies of *F15 Strike Eagle* have been sold worldwide – is often attributed to the high quality of their games and packaging. But criticisms are also levelled at the accompanying price. Stewart Bell, managing director of the UK operation, justifies the cost with some heavy statistics: '*Gunship* cost four million dollars and took over 17 man years to develop (the end product was actually one-and-a-half years late). The final packaging and documentation is of a very high quality and is always well researched.

'Many companies release a product and then forget about it. Microprose's product development is a constantly ongoing process which lasts between one and two years. *Project Stealth Fighter* is currently in its eighth version, utilising faster algorithms and improved gameplay, while the latest version of the CBM 64 *Pirates!* has animated pictures.

'The extensive technical support offered to customers is also covered by the cost. Customer service is an important aspect of MicroProse's business: once a product is finished, a full back-up service is available to customers who can phone our helpline at any time to ask for information regarding play and equipment.

'MicroProse also award certificates to high scorers on their games. Winners of the Congressional Medal of honour on *Gunship* are to be presented with a certificate, signed by Bill, and treated to a party as well as a flight in Bill's T28 fighter plane!

With such an expensive initial outlay, how do they combat piracy? 'We rely on the packaging and the large amount of documentation to put off prospective software pirates; no-one wants to photocopy a 150-page booklet! We prevent early versions of programs from getting out by creating the individual components of the game separately. All the components of each game are then put together just before the last mastering before duplication. This way no 'complete' game can hit the streets before sales. However, the amount of piracy in certain countries *has* limited distribution. Italy and Spain are simply not worth exporting to.'

Further critique involves the militaristic and often jingoistic tone associated with MicroProse games. This is dismissed with equal verve: 'We're all young boys at heart. Everyone wants to fly and the realism afforded by the combat scenarios only helps to heighten the excitement; if the simulation was boring you simply wouldn't buy it.

'Bill lost a lot of friends in Vietnam and he is careful not to glorify death in our products. When you lose a highly decorated pilot in Gunship, the loss you feel is real; the experience teaches you about life and about yourself.

'Although we do take the American viewpoint of freedom and liberty, it is important to stress that each program is simply a simulation which allows the player to see how he would fare in actual events which have, and still are, taking place. In fact, there's a strange irony in the approach to our products: *Silent Service* deals with the attack of American submarines on Japanese shipping, yet this same simulation is one of our biggest exports to Japan.

'And to be fair, we do cover both sides of the coin: our air traffic control program (CBM 64) puts the player in the position of saving lives rather than the contrary.'

We would have spoken to 'Wild' Bill Stealey about the matter – but he was at the Pentagon . . .

FORTHCOMING RELEASES

Airborne Ranger – July.

Times of Lore – July. An Origin role-playing game, but more instantly accessible than previous offerings.
Programmed by Chris Roberts, sound by Sensible Software of CBM64 *Wizball* fame.

Moebius II – Autumn. A simplified version of the CBM 64 program, utilising the action sequences alone.

Space Rogue – Autumn. Implemented in a similar fashion to *Moebius II*.

Project Stealth Fighter – A flight simulation of '*Gunship* standard plus', containing filled-in 3-D with faster frame updates. Programmed by Daryl D.

Red Storm Rising – Based on Tom Clancy's best-selling novel. CBM 64 release planned; Spectrum version to follow.

Pirates! – Not finalised as yet, but MicroProse are keen to release a Spectrum version.

CRASH COMPETITION

WIN ACCOLADE'S TEE-BAG!

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IN THIS GREAT *MINI-PUTT* COMPETITION

You've played mini-golf in the open air, in parks, at the seaside, in Blackpool, Brighton and Marbella, but chances are you've never played it on your Spectrum. Accolade's *Mini Putt* is soon to change all that. Featuring several suitably whacky and devious courses it gives you the chance to savour the pleasure of a mini-golf game from the comfort of your softest armchair. Forget the biting wind, the driving rain, the uncomfortably beating sun; sunburn and pneumonia, traditional hazards of a mini-golfer's life, are definitely out. The only decision you'll have to make is whether you have the energy to tear open the next bag of crisps.

And after all that inactivity, the very first thing you'll want to do is leap out into the fresh air (as soon as the conditions are favourable, of course) and try out your new-found skills. To start you off on your energetic golfing career, Accolade are giving you the chance to win a fabulous, high-quality Head sports bag, filled with a host of goodies (hard and soft golf balls, tees, cap, T-shirt) and an incredibly expensive tracksuit.

All you have to do is design the most original, exciting, innovative and demanding one-hole mini-putt course you can think of. Ideas are more important than artwork: entries are judged on the basis of initiative rather than skill (we're a very fair bunch here at CRASH towers).

20 copies of *Mini Putt* and **20** T-shirts await the runners up. Send your designs to

ACCOLADE AHEAD COMP, CRASH *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 1DB*

Entries must be received by July 5 and the decision of the appointed judges is absolutely final in all respects.


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Nick Roberts's PLAYING TIPS



Right, I've decided I'm going on a diet. You may not believe it, looking at the new CRASH T-shirt ads, but I used to be under weight once! A cut down on all those little luxuries in life and a bit more exercise should do the trick. Talking of exercise, that tip special last month was the best I've ever had! All that running up and down stairs, doing Scumball jigsaws and the pulling out of hair, it's enough to make Rambo out of puff! This month I have a fantastic Inside Outing special with maps, tips and the most daunting POKE routine that I have ever seen. I hope that massive routine works because it has had to be tested three times already! I've got a map of Knightmare and loads of Multiface POKEs as well as the regular Cheat Mode Motel and Flashback sections. Anyway, enough of this rambling on just to fill up the box, here are the tips . . .

CRACKING *KARNOV*

***Karnov*, the sparking new game from Electric Dreams, has been tipped by the programmers! Yes that's right, Mr Micro who programmed the game have written these tips on how to complete each level!**

LEVEL 1

To kill the big fish at the end of the level . . .
1 Plant your ladder at the end of the buildings, just as the fish comes onto the screen.
2 Climb up here to get a boomerang.
3 Activate it, run at the fish until she moves towards you then fire at her and duck.
4 This will kill her but watch out for further shots before she dies.

LEVEL 2

To kill the towers at the start . . .
1 Shoot them as quickly as possible. Double or triple fire power are better than any icons.
2 Don't scroll any extra towers on.
3 Try to kill the head as soon as possible.
4 If you get behind a head it won't fire at you.

To kill the lion and arabs . . .
1 If you are flying, drop bombs on them.
2 If you are walking then wait until they come into view and duck and fire quickly. When you have shot the lions the arab may fire at you so be careful.

LEVEL 3

To kill the birds at the start . . .
1 Run underneath them firing and get to the tree.
2 Run up the tree firing.

To avoid the next birds . . .
1 Jump by the tree and an icon should appear ahead of you.
2 Jump onto this icon and turn around, fall off the ledge.
3 Run left along this ledge.
4 Jump off left here, back to the start of the screen and kill the birds.

To kill the mud men on the ledges . . .
Run underneath the bottom ledge, wait a while and jump and duck, then shoot at them quickly.

To kill T-Rex . . .
1 Jump on the ledge before you get to the T-Rex and you will get a boomerang.
2 Kill the birds when you jump off the ledge (there are plenty of power pills to help you).
3 Activate your boomerang and fire at the T-Rex when you see it.

LEVEL 4

To get past the volcanoes . . .
1 You can bomb them.
2 They flash red just before exploding so you can time them before jumping.
3 You can always shoot the lava balls so fire at them as they come towards you.
4 Remember, practise makes perfect!

To kill the jumping jacks . . .
1 Shoot with double or triple fire power at the top of the stairs.
2 Activate your kart at the top of the stairs (if you have that icon!).

To kill the Medusa . . .
1 Run quick and drop a bomb under her.
2 Using a boomerang or multi-fire can help.
3 Shoot the Medusa and when she starts to shoot back at you just jump up and continue firing quickly.
4 You can run through or jump over her to avoid her spit if needed!

LEVEL 5

To kill the underwater men with spears . . .
1 Try to out-swim them.
2 If this fails then swim to the top of the water and fire.

To kill the clams . . .
Wait till they open and fire quickly.

LEVEL 6

To get past the fish at the towers . . .
1 Try ignoring the fish and running up each ladder but jump when you reach the top to avoid the last fish.
2 Kill one fish at a time (fish at base) and plant a bomb at base of tower to blow the strut.

To kill the owls . . .
1 Keep firing at the owl avoiding his shots.
2 On the fourth shot the owl will explode (don't get too near!).

The end of the level . . .
1 Trigger the first Medusa and kill it.
2 Jump by the figurehead to get a power pill (apple).
3 Trigger the last Medusa, get the power pill and jump backward to avoid the figurehead firing.
4 Kill the last Medusa to finish the level.

LEVEL 7

To kill the hydra . . .
1 Activate the hydra and go down the steps as far as possible.
2 You should be able to stand still without being shot and jump between the hydras bullets and kill him (a lot of shots needed).
3 Watch out for the floor disappearing after you have shot the hydra.
4 You can also kill the hydra by standing just to the right of the spinning floor, but you have to jump to miss one of the shots.

To kill the T-Rex
1 Trigger the T-Rex, kill the bat and fire, trying to avoid the flames.
2 Go to where the hydra was and drop a bomb through the hole just before you drop through.
3 Avoid the T-Rex flames and the bat.

To get past the boulder . . .
Crouch on the step to avoid being hit.

LEVEL 8

To kill the stone figures firing at you . . .
Shoot their eyes jumping or crouching to avoid the flames fired at you.

To kill the ents (tree stumps) . . .
Fire at them but watch out – they fire a streak along the floor occasionally.

LEVEL 9

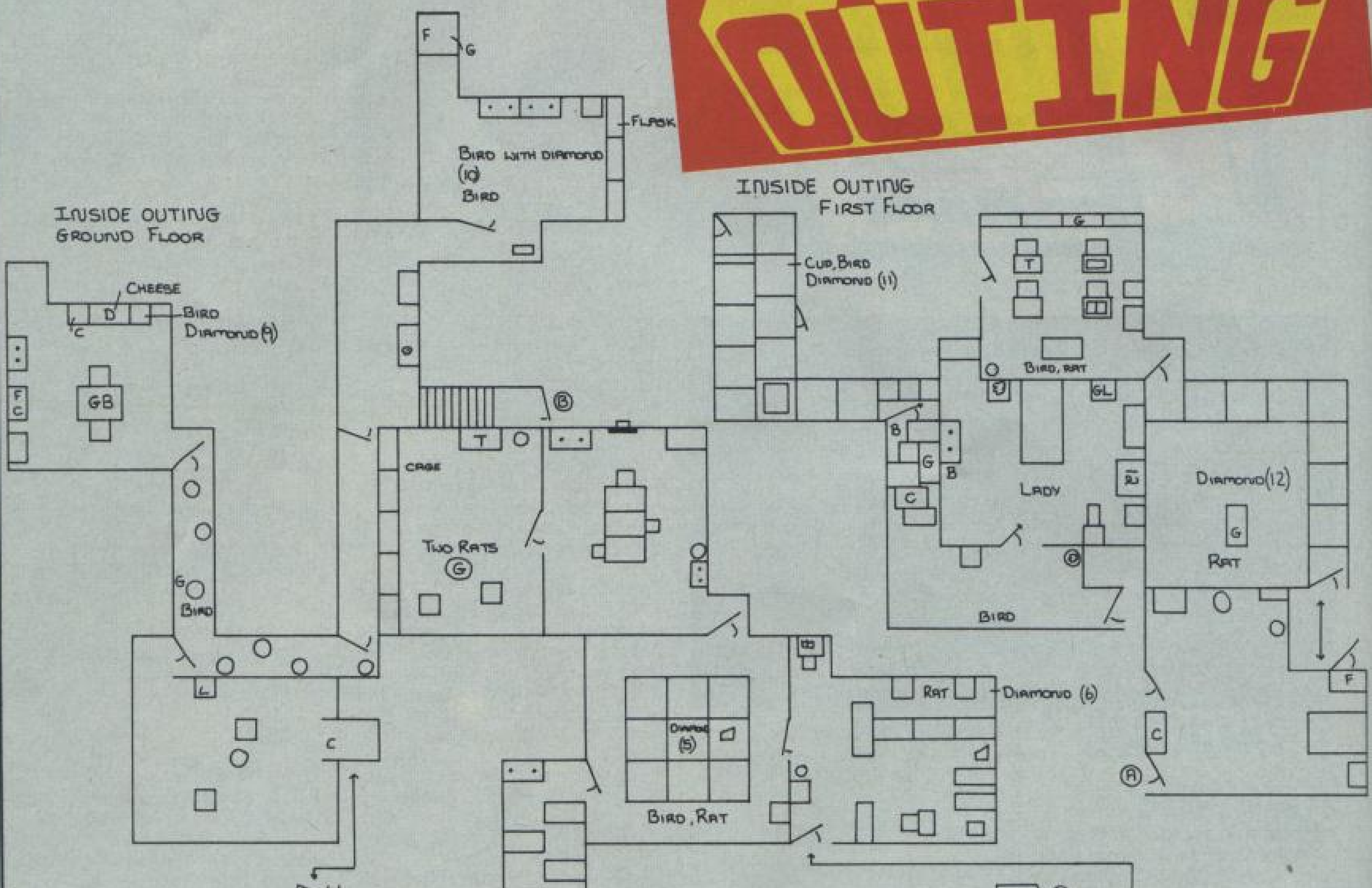
To get the wizard . . .
1 The way to the wizard looks sealed but don't be fooled by a small illusion. A bomb in the right place or closer inspection of the ground might prove useful!
2 Fire quickly at him when he appears.
3 Remember 'Don't be upset when you die, just rewind the tape and have another try!'

A CLASH OF THUNDER

Kris Blythe of Penn has sent in this quick tip for Elite's *Thundercats* just in case anyone has got stuck on the last screen.

If you ever manage to reach the last screen, 14, you will see that the direction arrow in the bottom left hand corner is pointing to the left. Ignore this for the moment, for if you follow it you will come across a tall wall with a small gap at the top which you can't jump through. Therefore, at the beginning of the screen, go in the opposite direction until you find a hover-scooter. Get into the scooter and now you can get through the hole in the top of the wall. You will see the Thundercats symbol and complete the game.

INSIDE OUTING



CREDITS

Thanks to Stephen and Chris Lang **for the tips and the maps, also to** Mark Lawrence **for that mega-POKE! Mark will soon be receiving £30 worth of software for it!**

(**D**=Diamond)

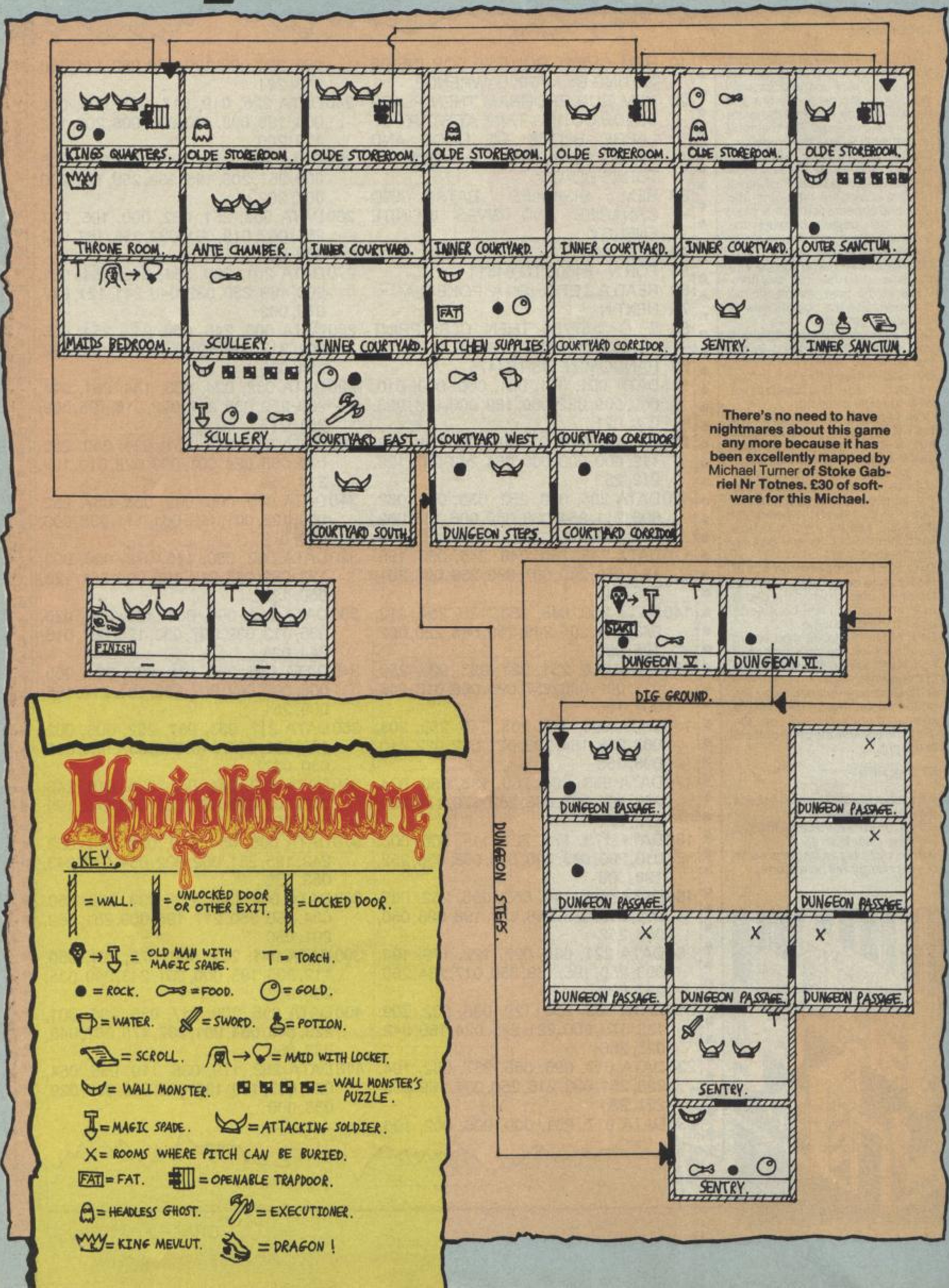
D01: Go to the cooker on the right and pull the top off. Jump into the cooker and pick up the diamond.
D02: Drop the die in the fire, the fire will now be out. Pull the grate out of the fireplace. The diamond is on the left side of the fireplace.
D03: Pot the balls into each pocket, the diamond will now appear under the table. Push small objects under the table until the diamond appears at the other side.
D04: Push objects between the two bookcases until the diamond appears at the other side.
D05: Drop some large objects into the hole, then fall into the hole. While in the hole search for the diamond. Use the objects now in the hole to get out.
D06: Jump over the two chairs – you will find the diamond in the corner.
D07: Move the picture by pushing it from one side. The diamond will be in the hole behind it.
D08: Drop the die in the fire, the fire will now go out. Pull the grate out of the fireplace. There is a secret door in the fireplace. When in the new room push small objects behind the bookcase until the diamond appears behind it.
D09: Pull the top off the cooker on the right. Let the bird out, now jump into the cooker and pick up the diamond.
D10: Stack up objects on top of the furniture on the right. Climb on top of the objects when the bird is near enough you will be able to pick up the diamond.
D11: Move the tables and chairs around so you can get into the top right hand corner. The diamond is in this corner.
D12: Drop large objects onto the bottom floor. Stack the objects against the clock, pick up the diamond and use the other objects to get out.

EXTRA TIPS

☆If a rat eats some cheese it stops moving for a while.
☆If you drop the bird cage, the bird will keep clear from it.
☆If you pick up a white glass some of your energy will be restored.



```
10 REM CHEAT ROUTINE FOR INSIDE
   OUTING BY MARK LAWRENCE
20 REM RUN PROGRAM THEN PLACE
   INSIDE OUTING TAPE AT START OF
   LARGE BLOCK OF CODE AND
   PRESS PLAY WHEN THE BORDER
   TURNS BLACK
30 REM DISABLES RATS AND
   CANARIES AND GIVES INFINITE
   ENERGY
40 LET C=0
50 FOR N=64000 TO 64511
60 READ A: LET C=C+A: POKE N,A
70 NEXT N
80 IF C<>57765 THEN CLS: PRINT
   "ERROR IN CODE": STOP
90 RANDOMIZE USR 64475
100 DATA 001, 001, 001, 000, 000, 010,
   000, 009, 032, 000, 159, 000, 091, 003,
   000, 021
110 DATA 250, 000, 000, 205, 251, 208,
   112, 000, 000, 000, 064, 243, 237, 123,
   212, 253
120 DATA 205, 060, 252, 030, 001, 062,
   008, 211, 254, 038, 050, 006, 156, 062,
   022, 205
130 DATA 245, 250, 048, 245, 062, 198,
   184, 048, 240, 037, 032, 239, 006, 201,
   205, 249
140 DATA 250, 048, 230, 120, 254, 212,
   048, 244, 205, 249, 250, 048, 220, 062,
   195, 050
150 DATA 016, 251, 221, 033, 025, 250,
   017, 002, 000, 237, 095, 006, 018, 046,
   001, 120
160 DATA 006, 215, 205, 245, 250, 208,
   062, 228, 184, 203, 021, 062, 022, 210,
   096, 250
170 DATA 058, 024, 250, 133, 050, 024,
   250, 101, 058, 056, 252, 170, 171, 221,
   172, 221
180 DATA 173, 173, 221, 119, 000, 006,
   010, 203, 099, 040, 013, 058, 056, 252,
   198, 008
190 DATA 131, 146, 050, 056, 252, 005,
   005, 005, 058, 056, 252, 198, 088, 050,
   056, 252
200 DATA 221, 035, 027, 122, 179, 194,
   093, 250, 195, 189, 250, 017, 234, 250,
   237, 083
210 DATA 169, 250, 129, 006, 002, 209,
   122, 179, 200, 221, 225, 024, 160, 042,
   025, 250
220 DATA 017, 096, 056, 237, 082, 194,
   228, 251, 033, 216, 250, 034, 169, 250,
   221, 225
230 DATA 017, 001, 000, 006, 002, 195,
   093, 250, 209, 122, 179, 202, 171, 250,
   213, 221
240 DATA 225, 019, 017, 001, 000, 006,
   004, 195, 093, 250, 006, 006, 209, 122,
   179, 200
250 DATA 221, 225, 195, 093, 250, 205,
   009, 251, 208, 195, 252, 250, 123, 230,
   007, 202
260 DATA 063, 251, 062, 000, 195, 007,
   251, 062, 019, 061, 032, 253, 167, 004,
   032, 003
270 DATA 201, 228, 251, 219, 254, 031,
   200, 169, 230, 032, 040, 241, 121, 047,
   079, 062
280 DATA 000, 246, 008, 211, 254, 055,
   201, 217, 005, 194, 109, 251, 028, 123,
   254, 059
290 DATA 032, 024, 033, 144, 251, 034,
   250, 250, 035, 217, 062, 016, 195, 009,
   251, 217
300 DATA 033, 039, 251, 034, 250, 250,
   030, 056, 024, 001, 000, 022, 010, 123,
   214, 056
310 DATA 079, 006, 000, 033, 057, 252,
   009, 126, 001, 128, 061, 111, 038, 000,
   009, 079
320 DATA 062, 080, 145, 079, 006, 003,
   122, 022, 064, 217, 195, 009, 251, 120,
   050, 135
330 DATA 251, 006, 004, 126, 018, 020,
   035, 013, 032, 007, 033, 128, 061, 016,
   244, 024
340 DATA 005, 200, 016, 239, 024, 000,
   006, 000, 062, 002, 203, 101, 217, 195,
   009, 251
350 DATA 217, 033, 057, 252, 006, 002,
   126, 230, 007, 040, 003, 053, 024, 005,
   030, 032
360 DATA 022, 064, 061, 035, 016, 240,
   006, 003, 028, 062, 008, 053, 242, 195,
   251, 062
370 DATA 005, 054, 079, 028, 043, 053,
   242, 195, 251, 062, 002, 054, 079, 043,
   053, 038
380 DATA 000, 046, 224, 033, 252, 250,
   034, 250, 250, 217, 195, 009, 251, 062,
   201, 050
390 DATA 041, 201, 050, 072, 201, 050,
   112, 205, 195, 000, 091, 243, 049, 035,
   206, 033
400 DATA 035, 206, 017, 036, 206, 001,
   223, 043, 054, 001, 237, 176, 062, 048,
   033, 056
410 DATA 252, 119, 035, 119, 035, 054,
   024, 035, 119, 195, 035, 250, 032, 029,
   038, 000
```



There's no need to have nightmares about this game any more because it has been excellently mapped by Michael Turner of Stoke Gabriel Nr Totnes. £30 of software for this Michael.

CHEAT MODE MOTEL

We're very lucky to still be in business here at Cheat Mode, the management have been closing down motels here, there and everywhere! Crossroads was one of the first to go, but that was probably because they didn't have any cheat modes!

SABOTAGE

The passwords for each level are: LEVEL 1: NONE NEEDED; LEVEL 2: BUMBLE BEE 2; LEVEL 3: HONORARIUM 3; LEVEL 4: PHENOMENON 4; LEVEL 5: ONOMASTICS 5; LEVEL 6: SALMAGUNDI 6; LEVEL 7: PSEUDONYMOUS; LEVEL 8: SONOMATOPIEA.
(occupant: **Divi and Carla Smith**)

CYBERNOID

Define your keys as 'YXES' and you will hear a little ditty. Redefine your keys again if you wish. When you begin the game you will now have infinite lives.
(occupant: **Bernard Lequay**)

IMPACT

The passwords for the levels are EGGS, CHIP, LEAD, TICK, CASE, FACE and USER.
(occupant: **Thistle**)

HYSTERIA

Go to the redefine keys option and type 'CHEATS', you should now start off with infinite lives.
(occupant: **Steven Bird**)

MULTIFACE ROUND-UP

I have amassed quite a collection of these quick and easy Multiface 1/128/3 POKEs over the past few months so I thought it was about time I printed a few of them. Below is a collection that I've printed in alphabetical order. The hackers of this little lot are Steve and Ricki, Stephen Ellis **and** Alex Higham.

ANARCHY	42405,n
	42887,0 (∞ lives)
ARKANOID 2	33054,n (10 maximum)
BLACK LAMP	33607,n (50 maximum)
DAN DARE II	53822,n
DEVIANTS	35272,0 (ammo)
	35286,0 (ammo)
	61196,0 (energy)
	26524,0 (auto valves)
DRILLER	48246,0 (∞ shield)
	49425,0 & 49022,0 (∞ drilling energy)
	34658,X (X coordinate, first two digits)
	34659,X (X coordinate, second two digits)
	34662,Y (Y coordinate, first two digits)
	34663,Y (Y coordinate, second two digits)
	34660,Z (Z coordinate, first two digits)
	34661,Z (Z coordinate, second two digits)
FIREFLY	44998,n
GARFIELD	33595,0 (no hunger)
GRYZOR	33015,n
HEAD OVER HEELS	42195,0 (∞ lives)
I, BALL 2	43384,n
IKARI WARRIORS	41178,n (40 maximum)
	40272,0 (invincibility)
JOE BLADE	37797,0 energy
	42916,0 (ammo)
	31865,0 (bomb count)
	38506,0 (time)
	33341,0 & 34802,0 & 39084,0 & 39133,0 (no keys)
KARNOV	32972,0 (∞ lives)
	24941,n
	32856,n
MEGA-APOCALYPSE	23318,n
NORTHSTAR	44433,0 (no aliens)
OUT RUN	39204,0 (∞ time)
RASTAN	48909,n
ROCKFORD	61697,n
SCOOBY DOO	29614,0 (∞ lives)
SCUMBALL	49098,n
	49093,n
SUPER SPRINT	49358,201 (no end)

NOTE: 'n' indicates the number of lives.

FLASHBACK

Pazazz! Yup, we have sound effects in FLASHBACK as well as groovy logos! Thanks for all your older POKEs to fill up this section and don't forget, if you want an older game hacked then write in, I might be able to help. This month Ian Carter **has asked for POKEs to Ultimate's *Sabre Wulf*. I have included them plus *Booty* and *Pyjamarama* routines by** Mark Flattery **and *Atic Atac* from** Scott Hulton.

SABRE WULF

As written by **Robin** in issue 11. To be immortal, become faster, have no animals and not have to collect the amulet, POKE 44786,0 just before the PRINT USR command in the loader. Then type RUN and load the rest of the program.

PYJAMARAMA

```
10 FOR I=23297 TO 23376
20 READ A: POKE I,A: NEXT I
30 PRINT "PLAY TAPE"
40 PRINT AT 10,10;: RANDOMIZE USR
   23297
50 DATA 175, 55, 221, 33, 96, 234, 17, 17,
   0, 205, 86, 5, 48, 242, 17, 97, 234, 1, 10,
   0, 205, 60, 32, 62, 255, 55, 221, 33,
   203, 92, 17, 216, 1, 205, 86, 5, 48, 241,
   243, 49, 0, 0, 33, 166, 93, 17, 22, 128,
   1, 231, 0, 237, 176, 33, 63, 91, 34, 61,
   128, 195, 22, 1, 28, 33, 72, 91, 34, 229,
   190, 195, 36, 248
60 DATA 175, 50, 18, 190, 195, 0, 130, 0:
   REM INFINITE LIVES
```

BOOTY

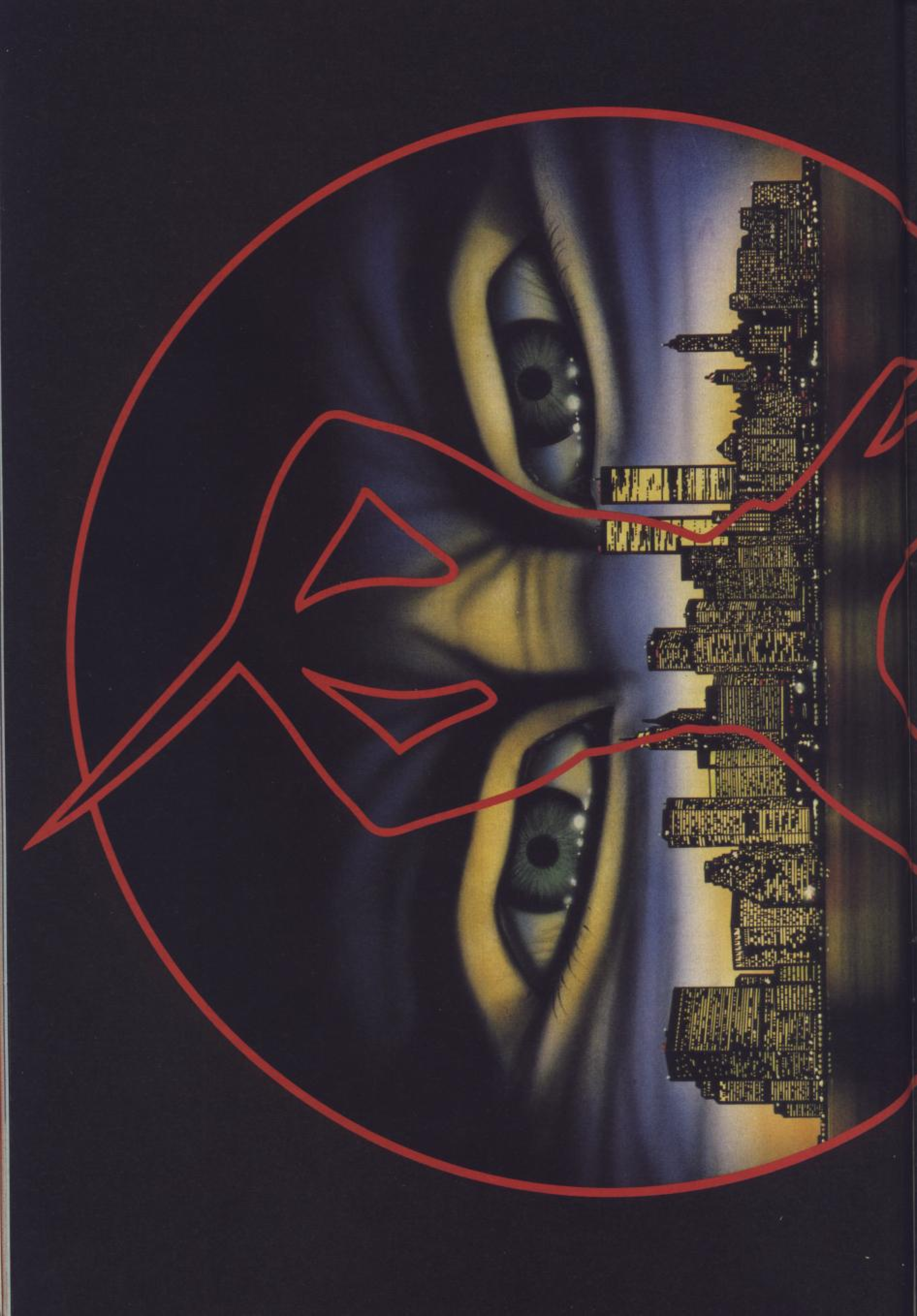
```
10 CLEAR 26000: LOAD ""CODE: LOAD
   ""CODE 26880: RANDOMIZE USR
   26880
20 POKE 58294,0: REM INFINITE LIVES:
   RANDOMIZE USR 52500
```

ATIC ATAC

```
10 REM ATIC ATAC HACK BY SCOTT
   HULTON
20 CLEAR 24063
30 LOAD ""SCREEN$
40 LOAD ""CODE: LOAD ""CODE
50 LOAD ""CODE: LOAD ""CODE
60 POKE 36519,0: REM INFINITE LIVES:
   PRINT USR 23424
```

Alright, I made a boob last month with the mention that a Through the Trap Door map was going to be in the tips special. There wasn't enough room to include it after the section went back down to 14 pages but never mind since it will be printed as soon as I can fit it in.

Please keep on sending in all your POKEs, tips, maps and competition entries to the usual address because it can't be done without you. Send them to . . . NICK ROBERTS, PLAYING TIPS, CRASH, *PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB*





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Can he vanquish the forces of Darkness and free the Princess?
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In the knife-edge world of the vigilante there is no place to rest, no time to think — but look sharp — there is always time to die! From the city subways to the gangland ghettos you will always encounter the disciples of evil who's mission it is to exterminate the only man on earth who dares to throw down the guantlet in their path — the Renegade.
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CRASH COURSE

A further look at Scetlander's products, including their Basic Mathematics and New Community suites

OF TIME AND SPACE . . .



by ROSETTA McLEOD

Environmental studies is now a core area in the curriculum for the 10 - 12 age range, and SCETLANDER's New Community programs can form the motivational centrepiece for work in this area. SCETLANDER tell me that since the reviews of their software appeared in the last CRASH COURSE, they have received a number of enquires. They can be contacted at *74 Victoria Crescent Road, Glasgow G12 9JN.*

BASIC MATHEMATICS

Subject: mathematics
Price: £20 (for the suite of eight programs)
Age range: 10-13 years (remedial)

THE first four programs in this suite – *Angle Estimation, Digit Addition, Dice Multiplication* and *Fraction Identification* – were reviewed in the last CRASH COURSE, and SCETLANDER tell me that a fair amount of interest was generated. The final four programs again cover a range of skills in basic mathematics.

Units: This is a simple drill and practice program where the pupil has to identify the units, tens and hundreds in three-figure numbers. The pupil is presented with a series of questions and must type in the number of units, tens and hundreds, and the program finishes when ten questions have been answered correctly. A question might ask, for instance, how many units are in the number 365. If the pupil answers 365, he will be told that he is correct, but that this could also be expressed as three hundreds, six tens and five units. Three attempts are given at each question, and at the end of the program the number of questions asked is shown, together with the percentage correct. Although not particularly interesting or entertaining, this is quite a useful reinforcement aid for pupils with learning difficulties.

Reading A Scale: Another drill and practice program, the aim this time is to give pupils practice in reading a scale which is numbered 0 to 6 with divisions of 0·1. The pupil must first begin by choosing the type of questions to practise: he can select whether the arrow in the question is to point directly at one of the whole numbers on the scale, to a division such as 2·4 or 3·5, to have the arrow halfway between two of the divisions eg. 2·35 or 5·15, or to have a mixture of these types of question. Ten questions are asked and the pupil can have up to three attempts at each before the correct answer is shown. The program ends by displaying a score table thus providing some feedback on pupil performance.

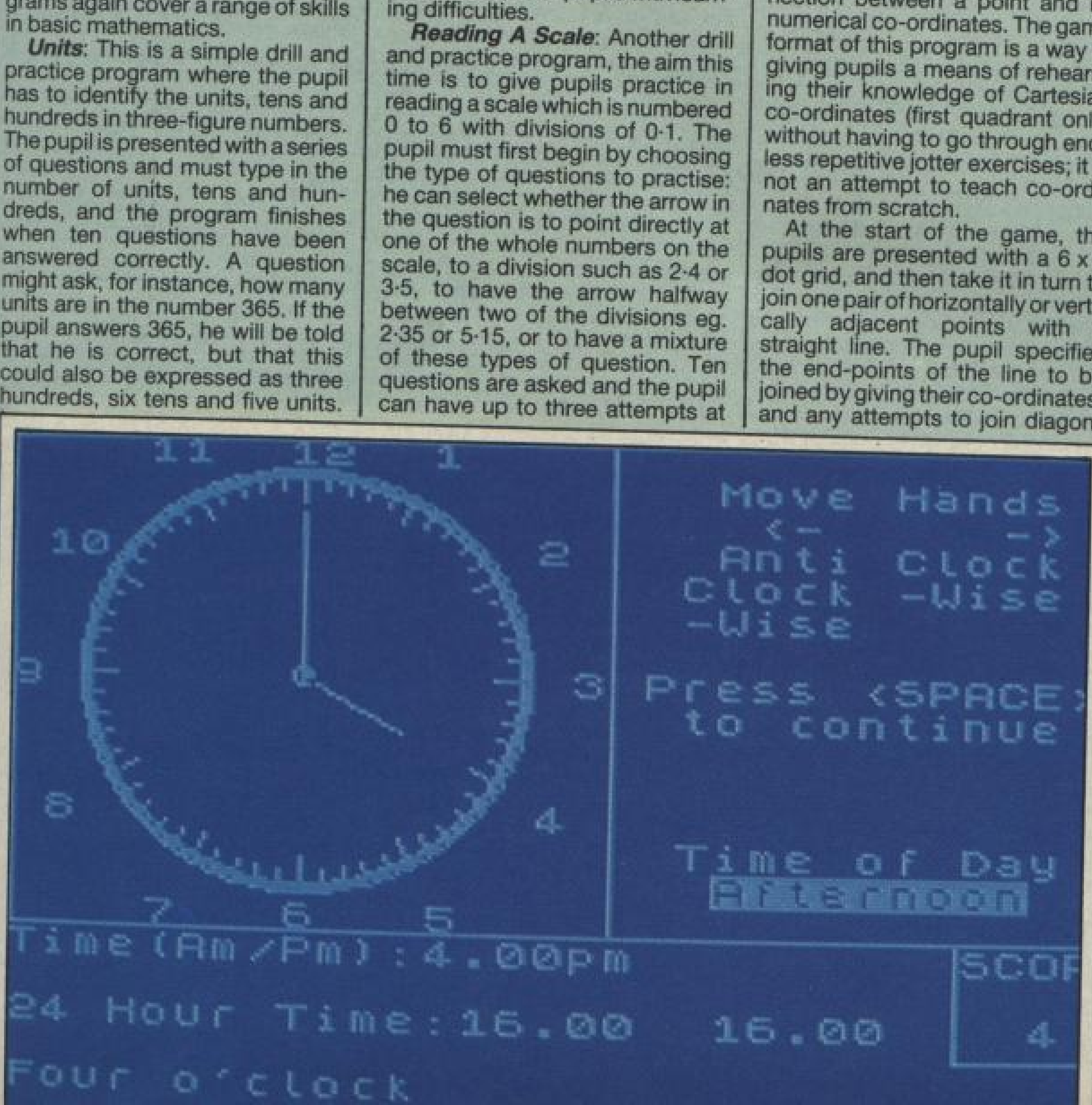
This is another uninspiring type of program, but it does provide the sort of practice which some pupils need.

Join The Dots: A much more motivational program, *Join The Dots* is in the form of a game for two people who take it in turns to join the dots on a grid to make boxes. The winner is the one who makes the most boxes. The aim of the game is to provide practice in using co-ordinates, and to overcome a very common problem whereby pupils mix up the X and Y co-ordinates or fail to see the connection between a point and its numerical co-ordinates. The game format of this program is a way of giving pupils a means of rehearsing their knowledge of Cartesian co-ordinates (first quadrant only) without having to go through endless repetitive jotter exercises; it is not an attempt to teach co-ordinates from scratch.

At the start of the game, the pupils are presented with a 6 x 6 dot grid, and then take it in turn to join one pair of horizontally or vertically adjacent points with a straight line. The pupil specifies the end-points of the line to be joined by giving their co-ordinates, and any attempts to join diagonally-connected points or non-adjacent points will be rejected. The teacher can change the number of boxes required to finish the game, from 1 to 25. Pupils enjoy playing this game, and the program provides a welcome alternative to worksheet exercises.

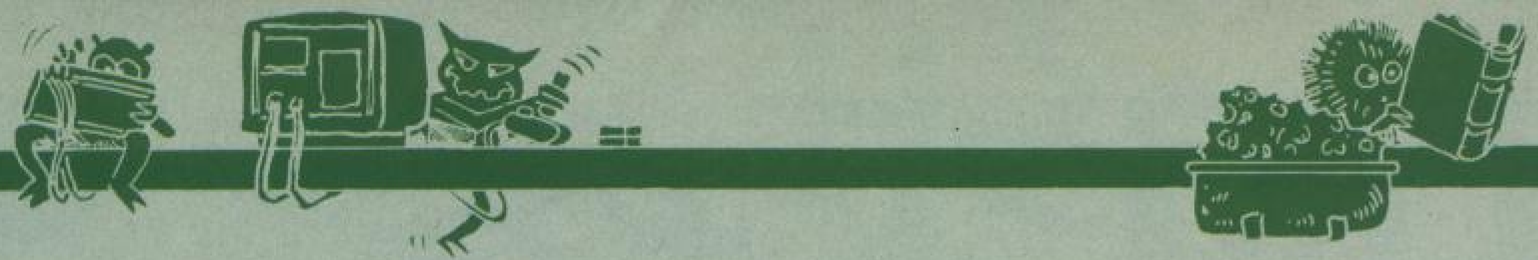
Time: The final program in the suite, *Time* aims to provide practice in settling the hands of a clock, writing times in am/pm notation, and using the 24 hour clock. If the first of these alternatives is chosen, the pupil is presented with a time on the clock face and must type in the time am/pm and/or 24 hour notation as selected by the teacher. If the am/pm times option is chosen, the pupil is given a series of questions in this notation and must use the arrow keys to set the clock to that time, and then specify the time in 24 hour notation.

Conversely, using the 24 hour times option, the hands of the clock must again set before the time is converted to the correct am/pm equivalent. In the final option, the pupil is given a series of questions in words (for example, half past six) and is required to set the clock and specify the time in the two different notations. The teacher can predetermine the number of questions to be asked and whether the time intervals are 15, 5 or 1 minute. There is also the option for the teacher to check pupil results and to print these out. This useful little program provides both reinforcement for pupils, and a diagnostic assessment for the teacher of areas of weakness.



COMMENTS

The full suite of eight programs represents a useful classroom resource for selective use by the teacher. Although no attempt is made in the drill and practice programs to inject a level of entertainment, and though the visual presentation of all the programs in terms of colour and use of graphics, is rather uninspiring, the *Basic Mathematics* suite does act as a very helpful reinforcement aid for the slower learner. ▶



THE NEW COMMUNITY

Subject: environmental studies
Retail price: £40 (for the suite of ten programs)
Age range: 10 years and over

THE NEW COMMUNITY suite of programs represents an attempt to explore certain concepts and skills in the area of Environmental Studies. The suite encourages pupils to develop an awareness of their surroundings and focusses on six main skill areas: researching, recording, interpreting, experiencing and feeling, relationships, and positive attitudes.

The suite contains ten different programs from which a teacher would be able to select those most suitable for a particular class of pupils. The topics covered include site selection, finance, water and sewage systems, housing sites, matching houses to family needs, and judging the priorities of a family moving to a new community. Some of the programs are better than others, but overall the suite provides the teacher with a very useful resource for an increasingly important area of the curriculum.

Housing Sites: This first program in the suite aims to reinforce the pupils' understanding of content already covered in lessons on direction, scale, conventional map symbols and contours, and asks them to use this knowledge to choose a site for house-building. A map appears on the screen and a flashing arrow indicates the feature which the pupils must first define: river, road, bridge, and so on.

The next stage involves the revision of scale: the scale is shown, and the pupils are given up to three attempts to answer questions such as, 'It is —— metres to walk from A to the bridge.'

The following sequence reinforces the meaning of contour lines, and questions occur regarding the relative accessibility of access to the various sites. Finally, pupils are asked to choose a site for house-building and write about their choice. The map is shown in attractive colours with quite good graphics, and the program as a whole would provide a useful stimulus for group discussion.

New Town Sites: This program attempts to make children aware of some of the environmental factors which must be considered before the selection of an area for the site of a new community is made. To begin with, the pupils have the option of seeing an explanation of the map symbols, before the map is built up on-screen one feature at a time. After the scale feature is presented, the five different places are shown by the first letter of the place name only, but the full name is shown at the bottom of the screen.

Having read the description of each site, the children are then asked to make judgements on the various sites in terms of space, resources, amenities, transport, water supply and drainage. At the end of the sequence, pupils are given a score related to their responses, and are then invited to go away and write about the site of their choice.

I liked this program very much as it encourages a variety of skills and could provide the motivational centrepiece for a wide range of classroom activities.

New Town Glossary and ***Spellbound***: Both of these are drill and practice programs which test a pupil's understanding of, and ability to spell, vocabulary relevant to the New Town project. In the Glossary program, a question appears on the screen, for example, 'What is a residential district situated on the outskirts of a town called?' The pupil can then choose from three possible answers – suburb, subway or region – and is allowed three attempts to get the correct response. Ten questions are asked, randomly selected from the 27 which the program contains, and at the end the pupil is given a score for his performance. In *Spellbound*, the pupil is asked to watch the box at the top of the screen in which a word is shown for a short time. He then has to type the word correctly, while keeping an eye on the box at the bottom of the screen which shows the time taken. If the response is incorrect, the word appears again, but this time it is split up into syllables. If the pupil makes a second mistake, the word remains on-screen for him to copy. Ten words out of a possible 85 are selected at random by the computer, and the score given at the end is based on the pupil's ability to spell each word correctly, and the time taken to answer.

I feel that this program would have been much more useful if there had been a facility for the teacher to select the words for each pupil, bearing in mind the varying abilities of children within a class.

New Town Finance: This program is a simulation of a simplified budget in which limited resources have to be allocated to certain priorities. In the teacher's notes it is suggested that the pupils tackle the task in groups, with each group representing a building and developing corporation. A fixed amount of money is allocated on a yearly basis, and for each of the three years, the pupils must allocate money for housing, services, factories, roads, shops, leisure, education and the health service. As each figure is allocated, it is deducted from the £100 million in the top right hand box. From the comments made by the computer about their yearly allocations, pupils should be getting it 'nearly right' by the third year's budget.

The control options in this program allow the teacher to change the optimum percentage settings for each category of spending, check on the progress of each group, and vary the £100 million figure. This flexibility is invaluable in a real classroom situation and the teacher notes give sensible and useful ideas for the integration of the program into the overall context of the project.

This is an excellent simulation which really does introduce to the pupils the concept of planning which lies behind the appearance of new housing developments.

Water Purification System and ***Sewage Works***: The main aim of each of these programs is to show the processes involved in water purification and sewage treatment and to introduce pupils to the specialised vocabulary involved in these topics. In the first program, the pupils are informed that a screen diagram will appear showing how water is made safe to drink. The flow of water through the process is shown by arrows, and if the pupil answers a question correctly, the arrow moves on to the next stage, with a scoring system keeping track of progress.

Sewage Works follows the same sort of format, with questions based on diagrams. In both of these programs the diagrams are clear and easy to follow, and would be ideal for the teacher to use in a full-class lesson using a large screen TV.

House Match 1 and ***2***: These two programs simulate a variety of different tasks and put the pupils in the position of having to think about the various problems involved in moving to a new community. *House Match 1* involves the pupils having to write to the Housing Officer to obtain accommodation. program offers structured help with the letter, prompting the user to enter the appropriate information such as address, date, details of the fictional family, number of bedrooms required etc.

These details are then printed on the screen in the form of the actual letter, and a hard copy of this can be obtained. The user then leaves the computer to write another letter on his own for a different imaginary family.

House Match 2 takes the scenario a stage further by putting pupils in the situation of being the Housing Officer who has received a letter requesting the allocation of a house for a new family moving into the area. The program aims to make pupils aware of the various factors which have to be considered before a house can be allocated. Seven types of house are available, and six families of varying status have to be considered. Pupils are asked to deal with each family in turn, and, after considering the graphic representation of the first house together with a description of its features, they must accept or reject it, taking into account a series of factors.

When a suitable house has been selected, the program offers the pupils the model letter which the Housing Officer might write. This is one of the best programs in the whole suite, providing the focal point for a wide range of learning activities. If a printer is available, it is possible to issue the pupil with a print-out of family and house details so that they can reach their decision through discussion away from the computer, before coming to the micro to verify their choices. Another option allows the large size display of family and house information, and this would be ideal if the teacher wished to introduce the program to the whole class. This flexibility makes the program an extremely useful resource.

Moving To A New Community: The aim of this program is to develop the pupils' logical thinking in the context of moving a family to a new house. The screen display shows a random list of tasks which have to be considered when a family is moving house and the pupils must put these into an order of priority. Each of the 17 tasks have to be given a priority on a scale of 1 to 6 where 1 is a more important job than 2, and so on.

When the pupils have completed the assignment, the screen shows the chosen order of priorities with a tick against each correct placing. The pupils can have two more tries to get everything correct, and the program retains the answers of each group so that the pupils can return to work on the program at a later date. The teacher's page allows the teacher to change the ordering of priorities, to delete groups, and to obtain print-outs. All in all, this is an excellent program which stimulates a tremendous amount of group and class discussion.

COMMENTS

The New Community package represents tremendous value for money and covers an area of the curriculum which is increasingly seen to be important. A whole term's work could be planned around the software, covering skills in language and number work as well as many other learning activities.

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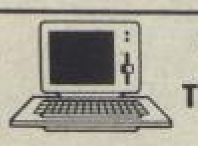


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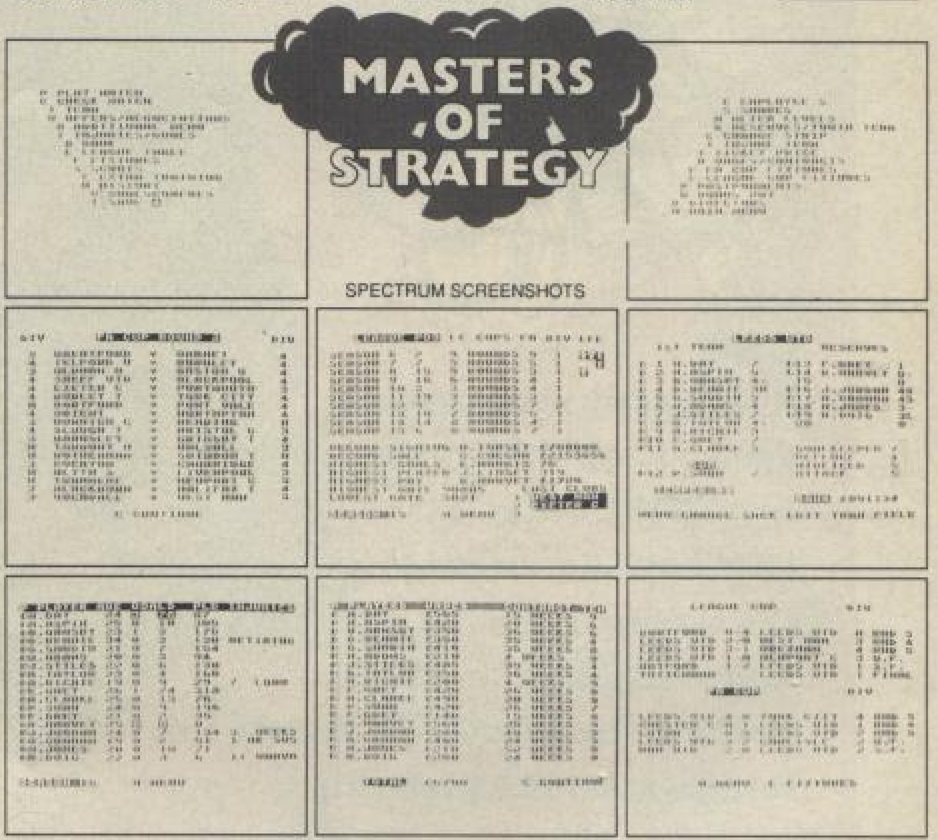
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ADVENTURE TRAIL with Samara

The summer lull has hit adventures as strongly as arcade games. Fortunately the quality of mail-order adventures remains high; this month one even features a female main character. As there are plenty of female adventurers it might be a good idea if programmers were to supplement their long list of heroes with one or two intrepid heroines . . .



ACHETON

Topologika, £9.95 disk only

Last month I reviewed Topologika's *Countdown to Doom*, an extended (text-only) version of an adventure previously released by Acornsoft. *Acheton*, another re-release didn't need any extending – it already had one of the most complex and convoluted adventure environments ever devised. Very much in the style of the archetypal *Colossal Adventure*, it combines a progressive science fiction scenario with the more traditional treasure-hunt theme.

The Ruling Council of Acheton issues a monumental challenge to sentient life-forms everywhere: explore the planet, discover the secrets of its magic locations and risk death to find as much treasure as possible to boost your reputation as interplanetary challenger supreme.

The journey begins modestly enough outside a farmhouse. You enter it and find a set of

standard adventuring equipment: an empty bottle, a bunch of keys and an oil lamp. A little more exploration reveals a massive network of bizarre underground caverns. Acheton is a planet of many secrets: magical laboratories, secret harbours, complex mazes, dangerous dungeons, gardens and cliffs are all concealed in a complex subterranean environment.

There are numerous treasures, ranging from jewel encrusted orbs to antique paintings and violins. Unfortunately just picking them up isn't good enough – you have to take them back to a safe near the entrance of the labyrinth. This is easier said than done – some routes are extremely difficult to negotiate while carrying certain objects. Should you try to close the safe door before you've collected enough, the Ruling Council gives sneering voice to its contempt.

One of the more justifiable criticisms levelled at this type of game is that long stretches of time are spent wandering around sets of forbidding but mostly empty caverns. Not so *Acheton* – budding magicians need to have their wits about them all the time. Innocuous looking torture chambers are more than likely to spring into life, the plants in the wizard's greenhouse are more dangerous than they look and gaping chasms are just waiting to swallow innocent adventurers up. Should you fall prey to a sudden and untimely death, you are given the option of reincarnation. If you choose to reject it your journey reaches a fitting end in the gloomy jaws of hell.

Experienced adventurers will find one or two of the problems rather familiar. Inevitably you need to fill your bottle with water and recharge your lamp after a given number of turns. Going on to automatic pilot doesn't always work though, as some seemingly obvious problems have deviously hidden depths. The Ruling Council has a nasty sense of humour and delights in leaving misleading clues. The one or two puzzles that you may have enough experience to solve come as a welcome respite from the high difficulty level that characterises the others. If you really do get hopelessly stuck, Topologika's inbuilt hint system is always ready to help . . .

For an older than average game *Acheton* has an efficient parser which responds to complex commands, including ALL and EXCEPT. There's no EXAMINE command (you see everything you need to in one go) and no RAMSAVE option so it's advisable to keep saving to disk.

All those who fell in love with the *Jewels of Darkness* trilogy and adventures of that ilk probably won't be able to resist it. It's definitely one of the best versions of that veteran genre on offer. *Acheton* is available for £9.95 direct from Topologika at *FREEPOST, PO Box 39, Stilton, Peterborough, Cambridgeshire, PE7 3BR*

OVERALL 87%

THE JADE STONE

Marlin Games, £2.95
Author: Linda Wright

Life is all romance and roses for Amora. Daughter of Lord Senidea and heiress to the kingdom of Nulom, she is engaged to her childhood sweetheart Amanton. Fiancé and father haven't exactly been on the best of terms so when the evil sorceror Mallumo indicates that he is about to declare war, Amanton rushes off in a valiant attempt to sort him out. Amanton is no he-man – in fact he's a bit of a wimp and it's not much of a surprise when the ransom note arrives. While the enraged Senidea rallies his army and charges off, the aged Sajo suggests that Amora seek help from the magical powers of the legendary Jade Stone.

Amora's journey, which is divided into two parts, begins in the comparative comfort of her father's palace and winds via a couple of villages, a forest, a marsh and a seemingly impassable canyon to the final showdown in Mallumo's castle. To fit all the text into 48K, only some of the locations have graphics. Although carefully drawn, they're hardly elaborate but definitely contribute that little extra to the atmosphere of the game.

The descriptions are characterised by a wry, humorous tone. The EXAMINE command is particularly rewarding and very often initiates a pithy, light-hearted response. Your dad turns out to be 'plump, short-tempered but generally harmless and extremely thick' while before your very eyes, the white-haired Sajo is 'getting older by the minute'.

Amora encounters many travellers on her intrepid quest and a little measure of interaction is necessary with all of them. This is where the casting of a woman as the hero becomes particularly interesting. Success depends on a strange mixture of feminism and femininity. Unlike Amanton, Amora isn't afraid of a little sword-play (she can more than hold her own when it comes to fighting a battle) but she lives in a world where (quite realistically) brain is as important as brawn: she often has to fall back on qualities of intelligence and compassion – what some people might call feminine intuition! Suffice it to say that it's a good idea to take a needle as well as a sword on your travels . . .

In fact, the puzzles are fairly straightforward (with some rather complex plot twisting towards the end) and very suitable for beginners. Typing HELP often provides you with a useful clue and if you're on the right track to a solution but haven't got it quite right, the program almost always tells you. Time and co-operation are of the essence. Dither for too long over a problem and you may find that both lover and dad have been crushed before you've even had a chance to save them.

The *PAW* ed parser accepts complex input and responds fairly well to different wordings of a particular command. There are the odd limitations but they're hardly the sort to bring you to a grinding halt as you flounder for the right words. Interesting use has been made of adverbs. Rush into action without a moment's thought and you may not succeed; behave with a little more care and, who knows, all your problems may be solved?

Like *Cloud 99*, which gained 75% last month, *The Jade Stone* (which has been around for a while now but for various reasons never reviewed) is an extremely refreshing and playable adventure. Its unusual and light-hearted tone should appeal to

▶ **The local down and out in *The Jade Stone* proves to be a mine of information – for a price . . .**



beginners and veteran adventurers alike. At £2.95 it's the sort of bargain you can't afford to miss. Contact Marlin Games at *19 Briar Close, Nailsea, Bristol, BS19 1QG*

OVERALL 79%

KINGDOM OF HAMIL

Topologika, £9.95 (disk only)
Author: Jonathan Partington

Topologika's second slot this month concerns a troubled and divided kingdom. As the rightful heir to the throne of Hamil, you were kidnapped in early infancy. As you grow older you are able to devise plans for escape and, following a long and exhausting journey, finally reach the shelter of a primitive chapel within the confines of your disinherited land. It's not long before you fall into a deep and dreamless sleep.

As you awake you realise that the chapel is surrounded by enemies on all sides; to leave it would mean almost certain death. You notice a metal rod, a piece of slightly whiffy steak and a bicycle lamp. Perhaps there is more than one way of getting out of the chapel . . .

The kingdom of Hamil turns out to be far from ordinary. In addition to the inevitable castle, it hides gigantic fountains, a bizarre museum and a complex system of underground caves. Exotic prehistoric time pockets are situated only a few steps away from treacherous mazes concealing untold treasures. Avoid sudden deadly rockfalls, try not to get cut off in a dead end and the crown jewels of Hamil may come within your legitimate grasp.

Location descriptions are suitably atmospheric and often extensive. Success depends on careful mapping and re-mapping of the environment; of many possible routes only one or two will lead you to safety. Being buried alive in a chamber of the maze of Hamil or failing to negotiate prehistoric paths only to plunge to your death to become a tasty pterodactyl snack are occupational hazards.

Ingenious variations on the labyrinth theme are designed to delight and frustrate. Maze lovers will spend hours mapping, saving to disk, checking and re-checking; lesser dedicatees might just take a peek at the inbuilt hint system, clues from which come in graduated form ranging from cryptic hints to full-blown solution.

As the future king of Hamil, you find a host of hostile and dangerous subjects. Pause for too long in one place and a huge rat, crow, aardvark or bat sweeps in to gobble you up. This lays obvious difficulties in the way of making a map but is also one of the easier hazards to avoid. As long as you keep moving you're unlikely to end up on the menu of a gigantic mutants' feast. A tyrannosaurus trampling towards you, a blood-thirsty vampire, a vindictive hobgoblin and a sobbing hexapod require a little more care. In some cases escape is the best (and only viable) policy; in others a little devious dealing might be of more help.

Sudden death is obviously a constant hazard. RAMSAVE would have been a useful facility but on disk it's not *that* sorely missed.

Jonathan Partington teaches Mathematics in a Cambridge college and insists that his adventures have an inner logic of their own which isn't always immediately obvious to the player. *Kingdom of Hamil* certainly creates a very bizarre, unpredictable atmosphere which makes its problems all the more challenging to solve. Topologika rates the difficulty level as medium. Although at first the puzzles might seem more baffling than that, they become more manageable once you've mastered the adventure's slightly idiosyncratic tone.

The parser is of standard Topologika complexity with the usual acceptance of commands connected by AND or including ALL and EXCEPT. This is my third Topologika adventure and I still haven't got used to the absence of the EXAMINE command. A program that only responds with 'I don't understand' when you attempt to look at an object more closely gives a constant reminder of its own limitations. All the potential for encoding clues in object descriptions is lost and there is no scope for further development of the atmosphere. In an adventure filled with bizarre creatures and even wilder landscapes, extra detail could only have been a bonus.

A maze-based adventure with a difference, *Kingdom of Hamil* is bound to appeal to avid map-makers. Others will be attracted by the off-beat scenario, the combination of prehistoric and magical elements as well as the promise of an array of weird and wonderful Hamiltonian beings. Available from the same address as *Acheton, Kingdom of Hamil* retails at £9.95.

OVERALL 78%

ENTER AT YOUR OWN RISK

Teenware, £2.95 (cassette), £5.95 (disk)
Author: Stephen Flint

You were just spending a quiet evening at home when suddenly your uncle stumbled in mumbling something about the old abandoned cottage where he spent his childhood. You're inclined to dismiss his story – until you notice he has a crossbow bolt protruding from his back . . .

On the way back from the hospital you stop at the cottage to investigate. A little exploration proves that your uncle's ravings about a secret portal to another world were based on fact. Beyond an innocuous looking door lies an ancient land of magic and mystery encompassing mountains, forests, deserts and curiously old-fashioned towns.

The environment of this two-part adventure, particularly in the cottage itself, is carefully described. The walls of the nursery, for instance, 'are covered in faded, peeling wallpaper. Broken toys are strewn across the flower. An old yellowed poster on the wall lists the alphabet.'

The world beyond the magic portal is inhabited by a medley of helpful and hostile characters. To progress, a little social interaction is required; a good turn usually transforms a disinterested stranger into a helpful friend. Completing a series of tasks for (among others) a surly gardener, a puzzled herbalist and an injured wizard allows you to advance further in your initially mysterious quest. The more tasks you complete the clearer the purpose of your mission becomes.

The potential for limited conversation is treated very realistically; people are much more keen to gossip about each other than to reveal facts about themselves. Once you've betrayed their trust, by attempting to attack for example, any chance of co-operation has, quite naturally, been forfeited. Occasionally people aren't sure exactly what it is that you want; ask and you might just be lucky enough to receive.

Puzzles are mostly logical although by no means always straightforward. The fact that the adventure consists of a fairly sequential series of tasks makes it easier to define immediate objectives. If you really do get stuck, typing HELP provides you with one or two clues. It's important to note that your ability to perform certain actions depends on the status of your health. Fighting and eating reduce and increase strength respectively. Typing ME or STRENGTH will inform you of your present physical state.

Enter at your own Risk was written using Gilsoft's *PAW* and exploits most of its excellent facilities. The parser accepts complex commands, X for EXAMINE and recognises RAMSAVE. It's occasionally fussy about the exact input to complete a particular action and on one or two occasions you find yourself fumbling desperately for the precise words. Most actions can only be phrased in one way and more often than not there's no indication of exactly how that should be. A few more clues in the object descriptions or a VOCAB command, to prevent verbal deadlock, would have been helpful.

Despite these relatively minor, but occasionally very annoying hitches, *Enter At Your Own Risk* is a competently presented and, on the whole, enjoyable adventure with one or two strikingly innovative features. It doesn't exploit the potential of the *PAW* to its full but, as long as you're prepared to put up with a slightly pedantic parser, £2.95 is a small price to pay for a few hours of entertainment. *Enter At Your Own Risk* is available from Stephen Flint, *5 Harrison Road, Stapleford, Nottingham, NG9 8GP*. The disk version, which has no extra features, costs £5.95.

OVERALL 60%

VIRUS

S.A.E.C., £2.99

The future of Spectrum adventure games hangs in the balance. Mr X, a renegade Time Lord plans to infect all of them with a deadly character-killing virus. Doctor Goo leaps into his time machine and travels to the planet Alinam in a desperate attempt to stop the dastardly plot.

Alinam has two contrasting climate zones and a several amenities open to locals and tourists alike. Unfortunately they all require a certain amount of money – a commodity which the eccentric doctor patently lacks. A little exploration and careful searching provides him with a small number of coins – just enough to help him a little further in his quest. As long as he makes careful use of them and ▶

doesn't squander away his new-found wealth in the amusement arcade he should be able to travel all over the planet, discover the secrets of the housing estate, learn of the sorrows of Tony, the chip shop owner and finally reach the nerve-centre of the virus operation itself.

A little interaction with Alinam's inhabitants, from witch to mechanoid droid, is definitely called for. There is ample opportunity for conversation although the violent approach can be as effective as a more concerned and compassionate one. The only language most traders understand, however, is the language of money.

Whereas characters are likely to respond in a rational, if sometimes idiosyncratic manner, object-orientated puzzles are far less logical. You're likely to hit on certain solutions by accident rather than design although occasional clues, given in response to the EXAMINE command or by other characters, should stop you from getting completely stuck. In moments of uncertainty it's best to rely on a combination of imagination and the list of acceptable vocabulary called up by a WORDS command. Doctor Goo's response to successful completion of a puzzle, in characteristically eccentric and scatterbrained terms, makes up for the trouble you might have experienced in attempting to solve it.

Sudden death, claim S.A.E.C, is not a feature of this game. They speak with their tongue lodged firmly in their collective cheek. As everyone knows, Time Lords never die – they simply undergo a continuous round of bodily transformations. If he's caught, a particularly nasty metamorphosis is forced on the good Doctor Goo. Death is an impossibility but what could be worse than an eternity of living death?

Virus, like *The Jade Stone* and *Enter At Your Own Risk*, was written using the *PAW*. As usual, the program accepts complex sentences (not including adverbs) and RAMSAVE. There is little allowance for alternative wordings of a necessary command but the vocabulary list usually helps you out on those occasions when you're really stuck for words.

Another example of a competent and slickly presented *PAW* ed adventure, *Virus* doesn't exactly stand head and shoulders above the crowd. It does present a perfectly playable, light-hearted and enjoyable challenge, though, and as long as you're not too fussy, is unlikely to leave you feeling cheated of your £2.99. *Virus* is available direct from S.A.E.C at *4 Kilmartin Lane, Carluke, Lanarkshire ML8 5RT.*

OVERALL 65%

SIGN STUMPS

ZZZZ

MARK GOODALL is stuck in his nightmare. He can't get into the pit near the beginning of the game or on to the bus.

CLIMB DOWN into the pit. CLIMB DOWN the well, examine the ashes and use the sign you find there to stop the bus.

HEROES OF KARN

More questions from Mark. This time he wants to know how to get past the swamp lizard and how to deal with the dungeon guard.

LIGHT GAS with the tinderbox. Use the bible to kill the barrow-wight. Take the money and use it to bribe the guard.

DRACULA

Homeless and hungry, DAVID ELLIS is still trying to get a room and a meal at the inn.

Examine the desk and ring the bell – when the man arrives sign the register. Go east to the dining room and order lamb and wine.

MATT LUCAS

TOBY BEN and LEE BEAVERSTOCK are both stuck in different places. Toby wants to know where and how to get the keys. Lee doesn't know what password to give when he taps the gravestone.

Knock on the door to enter Joe's Place. Turn the picture. Say OUT

GREMLINS

Liverpudlian JAMES DUFFY has run into problems in the garage.

OPEN VALVE, LIGHT TORCH, WELD SNOW, TAKE LADDER. You don't need the snowplough.

IMAGINATION

GRAHAM ALLISON from Stoke-on-Trent has sent in a very long list of questions:
1 What's the bucket of coal for?
2 Where are the chips?
3 How do I fill the oil can?
4 What do I need to move the rocks?
5 What do I do with the pyjama cord?
6 Where do I find the food for the bat?
7 How can I persuade the child to give me the yoyo?

1 Drop the coals near the forest to melt the snow. You can also use them to attract the bull.
2 In the dispenser.
3 Fill the can when you strike oil.
4 Use the pickaxe from the cell to smash the rocks.
5 Paint it with the tin of black paint to get past the Japanese guard.
6 Give her the icicle.

(With thanks to JEFFREY WALKER)

KENTILLA

NATILIE RIPSHER has several questions:
1 How do you carry the sword across the river?
2 Is the black knife of any use?
3 How do you enter the castle?
4 Where do you find the rope?
5 Where can I find the key to the treasure room?

1 Say KENTILLA to teleport the sword.
2 Give the black knife to Elva.
3 Rescue Timandra from the swamp and return her to Zelda. She'll give you a lift.
4 Give the Chief Cavezat a present.
5 Wait for the Urga Maul to attack you in the dungeon. EXAMINE him twice to find the key. Keep killing Urgas until you find the one that is carrying the small key. Use it to open the chest.

THE PAWN

RINO A ROSENVINGE from as far away as Norway has scored 35 points so far and wants to know:
1 Where do I find the water?
2 How do I pass the guards?
3 Where can I find a light?

1 From the guru's hut go S, E, NW, NW. Climb to the top of the plateau and put some snow in the bowl.
2 Give the note that Kronos gives you to the guards.
3 Search the stump for a pouch. Mix the colours together.

SUPERHEROES

'I finished *The Guild Of Thieves* at 1.32 am on Sunday, 3rd April,' claims Mr S R Lawson from Cumbria. The final message runs: *The Master thief inspects the items you have 'obtained' and says 'Excellent – you got everything. This is a most impressive performance, worthy of the Guildmaster himself. May I be the first to congratulate you and officially welcome you to the ranks of the Guild of Thieves.'*
Congratulations, Mr Lawson, *The Guild of Thieves* Superhero! I wonder how long it will take before we feature a *Jinxter* Superhero in Adventure Trail . . .

WITH REGRET . . .

Last month I failed to mention that Haggisoft's adventure *Monster* is available *only* on 128K cassette. (Put a witty comment here, Steve. Sorry, Sam – couldn't think of one – Ed.)

CLUBBING TOGETHER

The Spectrum Adventure Club has asked me to give them a mention. They seek to bring together artists, designers and Spectrum programmers so that they can benefit from each others' talents. Membership is 50p per quarter and newsletters are issued every two or three months. Anyone who's interested should contact the club at *21 Winchester Avenue, Cardiff, CF3 7BT*

Bamboozled? Successful? Smug? Bemused? Send your tips, queries and comments on adventures old and new to SAMARA'S SIGNSTUMPS, CRASH, *PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB.*

The most interesting are published but I'm afraid that personal replies aren't really possible.

1987 PBM MAILBOX



CRISIS? – WHAT CRISIS?

BRENDON KAVANAGH presents some more readers' reviews and reports on the progress of Avalon**'s inhabitants . . .**

READERS' REVIEWS

Flaming June already. How time flies when you're having fun, eh? The PBM hobby is swelling – I have so many offers, news items and letters coming in that I don't know what to do with them! Not that I'm complaining; keep those letters rolling in, I'll find space to fit them in sometime . . . Anyway, there's plenty of good stuff here for you this month: the long awaited review of *Crisis* is here at last, as is a report of the goings on in *Avalon*. And let's not forget the generous offer from Spellbinder Games: FREE start-ups to all CRASH readers who write to Spellbinder; an offer unlike any other!

Crisis is a low priced and, shall we say, not over-complicated PBM strategy game. For some time now CRASH reader reviewers **Mark England** and **Graham Rogers** have been giving the game a good hard play. Graham has kept in touch with me on a regular basis since his start-up and it would not be true to say that he has encountered no GM problems. At one point he was dropped from a game for 'running out of credit' (which he didn't exactly do) but after a while good old Colin (Colin Filburn of Mystery And Adventure Games – the GM!) came to his rescue and got Graham started up once more. I understand that his second attempt was fairly successful!

Now then, on to the End Of Game report. Sadly I do not have enough space to print both reports this month, but here is Mark England's view of *Crisis* for your reading:

A common complaint of postal gaming is that PBM games can often be slow to develop at the start of the game. In *Crisis* I found no such problem! The player is thrown into battle from the word Go!, and for the rest of the game there is little break from the bedlam of war. I'm sure that players rarely have more than one turn in a game of *Crisis* without action on at least one of their battle lines. By turn 20 in the game I played, only three players (including myself) out of the initial nine had survived.

Despite the excitement and speed of development, I do feel that *Crisis* has several shortcomings. Although it makes no pretence of being a complex strategy game, gameplay is still a little shallow and limited. The whole plot of the game could be simplified to the general elements of moving your troops around the map (too small in my game but now improved and enlarged), 'nuking' your opponents and building factories to raise more money to recruit more troops, manufacture more missiles and more factories . . . Quite simple really.

The turnsheet is nothing spectacular but it conveys the information required with accuracy. It lets you know where the action is, who is firing missiles at whom, who owns what (if you know what I mean), and how your own position stands.

Each turn, all players receives a newsletter containing general news and news specific to their own game. The best section of this small organ is The Rumour Board. This is where player interaction takes place. (Slanging matches are a regular occurrance here I can assure you! But all in good humour, of course.)

To conclude, I have enjoyed playing *Crisis* (mainly because of the speed of play). However, I do find it a touch simple when creating strategies and I'm not sure if I would play the game again. However, I do believe that the game makes an ideal start into the world of postal gaming, mainly because it's cheap and not over-complicated. But I doubt that the serious gamer would enjoy *Crisis*.

ME

So there you have it, *Crisis* finally covered! A new developed version of *Crisis* is on its way with a larger map and revised rules – effectively a new game by all accounts. I eagerly await receipt of further information . . .

SPECIAL START-UP OFFERS

Chris Dempsey of **Spellbinder Games** has been kind enough to offer MAILBOX readers free start-ups in a selection of the Spellbinder Games. To be quite honest, Chris offered these niceties many moons ago. Still, here they are now:

Spiral Arm is a low(ish) priced strategic science fiction wargame, very popular in the *Flagship* ratings. I have never played this game but every now and then somebody says something kind about the mixture of economics, warfare, strategy and diplomacy involved. *Spiral Arm* is a game involving exploration, the colonisation of other worlds, a bit of scrapping and a fair amount of imperialism on a galactic scale. Players who do not like fiddling with numbers should perhaps avoid this one, otherwise the offer of free start-up, rules and first three turns is a good one.

Keys Of Bled is an old but much-enjoyed fantasy game. The plot? You were the captain of an interstellar colony ship. You have since been forced to crash-land on a dubious world – all that survived the crash was yourself, 200 colonists and some livestock. It comes to your attention that intelligent life exists on the planet, that you will not be rescued (no SOS was made), and that you have the resources to survive on the new world. Here, the game starts. You decide upon your own objectives and play the game with

the aim of developing your character as you wish. The game mechanism is very flexible to allow you to do this. *Keys Of Bled* is a very well established game with a good following. FRP fanatics may enjoy this one. Again, the offer is free start-up, rules and three turns.

Worlds In Conflict *was featured in my write-up of this year's PBM Convention. Anyone who tried to write to the address will have realised that it was incorrect. Oops! Anyway, Worlds In Conflict* was described to me at the convention as a Play By Mail form of the TV science fiction soap opera 'V'. Factionalised alien invaders battle it out against factionalised human defenders of the planet Earth. There are 22 player positions in the game; 14 nations (USSR, USA and so on) and eight alien ships. The game strikes me as being a very complex one – a lot of economics and diplomacy is required just to survive, let alone attempt to win. Combat is split into nine sections (these involve different types of fire and manoeuvres) and so must be carefully thought out. This is not a simple game of the bang-bang-you're-dead style: it's one for the thinkers amongst us – whoever they are. Once more, the offer is a free start-up, rulebook and first three turns. Not bad at all.

Right then, there you have it. Games there for all tastes, I reckon. Ah yes – I mustn't forget to let you know that Spellbinder have a new season of Phil Shulkind's *Kickabout* football game starting in June. There you are, I remembered. If you wish to take advantage of any of these offers then you can write to Spellbinder at *PO Box 60, Wath-Upon-Dearne, Rotherham, South Yorks S63 7PR*. Don't forget to send an SSAE if you are wanting further information on any of the above games!

CHRONICLES OF THE KNIGHTS OF AVALON

Finally, here it is. An almost up-to-date report on what's going on in the world of *Avalon*. All five special CRASH games are going well, although the earlier games are a little more active than the later editions. Approximately 300 players are left in the running for Jade Games' prize to the winner – that elusive castle soon to be pictured within these very pages. Speculation could be made, but I feel it is too early yet to point out a possible victor. Unconfirmed reports have reached my ears that in April several young Squires were promoted to Knights. Congratulations! Your glory will be shared with the public next issue. As at turn number seven the top four placings were as follows:

1 COGAN LISTER
(Squire – Game One) 897 points
2 BORAGO THE BIBULOUS
(Squire – Game Three) 863 points
3 FRIKKON FIVE FINGERS
(Squire – Game Two) 844 points
4 KING D'SUSILIS MARAU
(Squire – Game Four) 761 points

Well done, keep it up!

I was interested to note that BORAGO THE BIBULOUS in Game Three was 200 points ahead of his nearest rival in the same game (TELTRABB OF ULDARLAN). Keep trying, guys, that castle could be yours yet!

Let us eagerly look forward to next month's update. Has COGAN LISTER been made a Knight Of Avalon? Argghl, the suspense is killing me . . .

COMING SOON: KJC GAMES SPECIAL

MAILBOX pays a visit to the KJC Offices at Cleveleys, centre of the Universe (alternatively, the middle of nowhere . . . ?)

THE FUTURE'S SO BRIGHT . . .

PAUL EVANS finally manages to go M.U.D. wrestling

If I went up to someone in the street and said 'I like M.U.D.', then they would probably think I was nuts – and I'd agree with them! However, if I said the same thing to someone on a Prestel chatline (or any other chatline for that matter), they would say 'Oh, that's nice', or something equally boring. Street-cred chatters might say 'Great! See you on Shades in two minutes!'. This is because Shades has become the *only* decent M.U.D. to be seen in.

'Ah, but what has Prestel or Shades got to do with a solution of soil and water?', I hear you cry. The answer is: absolutely nothing, as in this case M.U.D. stands for Multi-User Dungeon. A Multi-User Dungeon is an adventure with a difference. For one thing, you need a modem to play it. Got it yet? You also need lots of friends with their own computers and modems. Taken the hint? For the denser life forms among you, the idea is that you all play the same adventure at the same time. You can interact with each other, try and come up with a solution or just wander around spoiling everybody else's fun. As you have probably guessed, M.U.D.s have potential for great growth and exploitation.

Once you have linked people together to play a game, your imagination can run wild! The first M.U.D. (called M.U.D., amazingly enough) was set up in the early eighties. At the time everyone was very enthusiastic and M.U.D. achieved cult status amongst comms users. It allows participants to take on different personalities, which I think is a great advantage; all your innermost feelings can be released through manipulation of your character. If you have a particularly nasty streak, then create a barbarian and slaughter people just for fun! However, the adventure side of the original M.U.D. was, in my opinion, very limited and hardly matched the standards of games such as *The Pawn* or even *The Hobbit*.

No other M.U.D.s appeared for a long time after the original until Micronet took interest in what a certain programmer in Greater London was up to . . .

THE ARCH-WIZARD

In a small cave near Gatwick airport, a mystical arch-wizard was hard at work. As a final tribute to himself, he decided to transfer his great epic on to a computer. His journey into the land of Shades would take some time to chronicle; suffice it to say, he worked long and hard. As the days passed, he fed more and more information into his advanced abacus until his task at last came to an end. All his memories of the land and its inhabitants had been entered into his PDP11. The adventurers of this earth could finally gaze upon the product of his wisdom and try to solve the puzzles that it had taken him ages to create. At last they would see the magical land of Shades!

Micronet purchased the wizard's knowledge from him and granted many users access to his computerised wonderland. The wizard was allowed to retain all his original power and became known as mighty Hazeii, the Arch-Wizard, who has complete control over the system and its users.

So now all you 'netters have access to Shades, I'd better tell you a bit about it. Shades is a large improvement on the original M.U.D. and integrates a complex adventure with the multi-user facility. Its presentation is very similar to Teletalk's. A few years ago, even to think of being able to scroll text on a Viewdata screen was a sign of madness. However, following extensive study, Hazeii finally came up with the goods. His method is quite simple; the text makes its way down the screen and, when it reaches the bottom, goes back up to the top. It's not perfect scrolling, but for Viewdata it's quite good! Shades is presented in this format with a line reserved at the bottom for entering text. Just type your line, press enter and the result is printed in the scrolling box. From now on just treat it like an ordinary adventure.

Your initial task, when entering Shades for the first time, is to create a new persona. This involves choosing your name, sex and password. You use this password to gain entry to the system every time you play. Once in the playing area, you are free to roam as you please. You can move around trying to earn points and it won't be long before someone or something grabs your attention.

The aim of the game is to win points by collecting treasures and putting them to interesting use! I won't say exactly how as this is obviously part of the game. The more points you accumulate, the higher your rank goes. You start at novice and can climb up the very long promotional ladder to wizard. There are about 18 different categories which have a variety of different names. Once you have attained the rank of wizard (for which you need 50,000+ points) you become all-powerful and can kill any player with a flick of your little finger. Fun, eh? It's a long route to the top, though, and the almighty category of arch-wizard (a 'god') can only be awarded by Hazeii himself. To my knowledge only two arch-wizards, including Hazeii, exist.

SHADISTS

The game is set in the land of Shades, a typical fantasy adventure environment. There's the inevitable ruined city, the river, the mystical wood and the castle. Getting into this fortress requires a slightly more indirect approach than just lowering the drawbridge.

It's feels as if the world actually exists because wherever you go, there are REAL people to talk to! Interaction between players takes up a lot of game time. You can kill, steal or do equally unpleasant things to other players who can then do nasty things to you. If you're feeling sociable then you can converse with other participants. If these players are very nice people they might help you; quite possibly they'll be asking for advice themselves.

You can go for a chat in the village pub where I found out just how much Shades has become a way of life for its users. Whilst talking to a Shadist about the fact that Genesis was the only group worth listening to, I was approached by another player who had used his fighting power to become a mercenary and was trading points for contracts on anyone lower than his rank! I think this sums up the way Shades works; it has created its own universe and has many groups that work together, as well as independently of each other, to try and beat the system (warning: not all groups should be trusted – some are keen to seize your power!).

I think by now you should have a good idea of how Shades works. Its parser is fairly basic but some of the interaction commands are very good. All the commands for TeleTalk (such as 'POGO' or 'SMILE') are available and a full list is given in the on-line instruction manual. My favourite is the EMOTE facility. This enables you to perform actions that will be displayed to their users. For example, when you type 'EMOTE bashes his head against the wall', the others see 'Paul bashes his head against the wall'. Loadsa fun!

If you dislike the Viewdata scrolling facility then you can switch to the normal scrolling format but this requires scrolling software (available on VTX Editor). The display is much better and easier to keep track of.

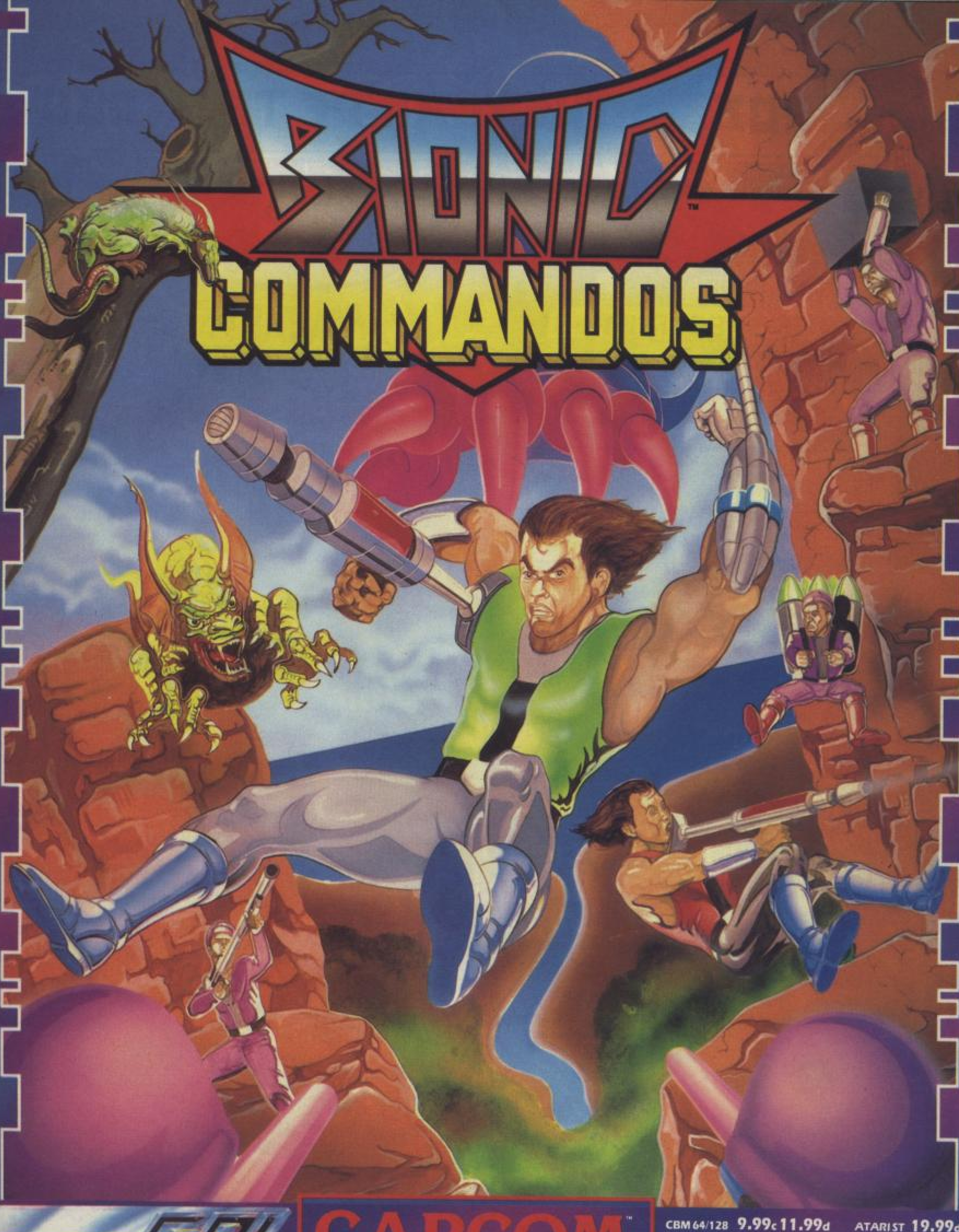
The price of this pleasure is 1·62p per minute (£1 an hour) if you are a member of Micronet, or 3p per minute if you are only subscribed to Prestel. It's worth every penny.

It's almost impossible to summarise this journey into the unknown. All I can say is that it is the only real goal for the adventurer looking for a bigger challenge. Instead of interacting with standard computer characters (whose reactions are predetermined) you are faced with real people whose actions will be different in every game you play. Some will stop at nothing to rob you of your treasure or power and really nasty Shadists won't hesitate to take pot-shots at you! You have to play it to sample the sense of reality. If this is only the beginning of M.U.D.s then we're in for a good time!!

The bottom line is: When on Prestel, type '*SHADES$'!

NEXT MONTH

I'm hoping to get a bit of an exclusive for next month, so to keep it that way I'm not going to tell you what it is! If there is room left after that, I'll have a look at home-shopping on Prestel. See you next month!

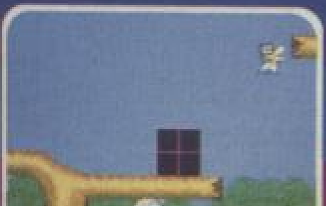


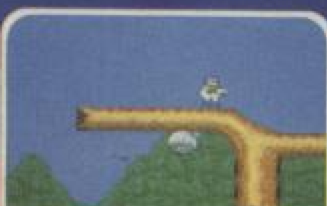
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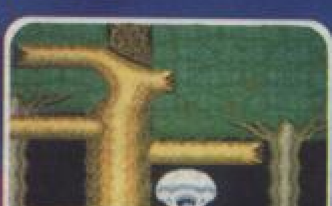


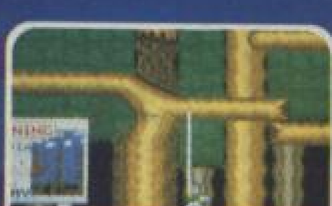


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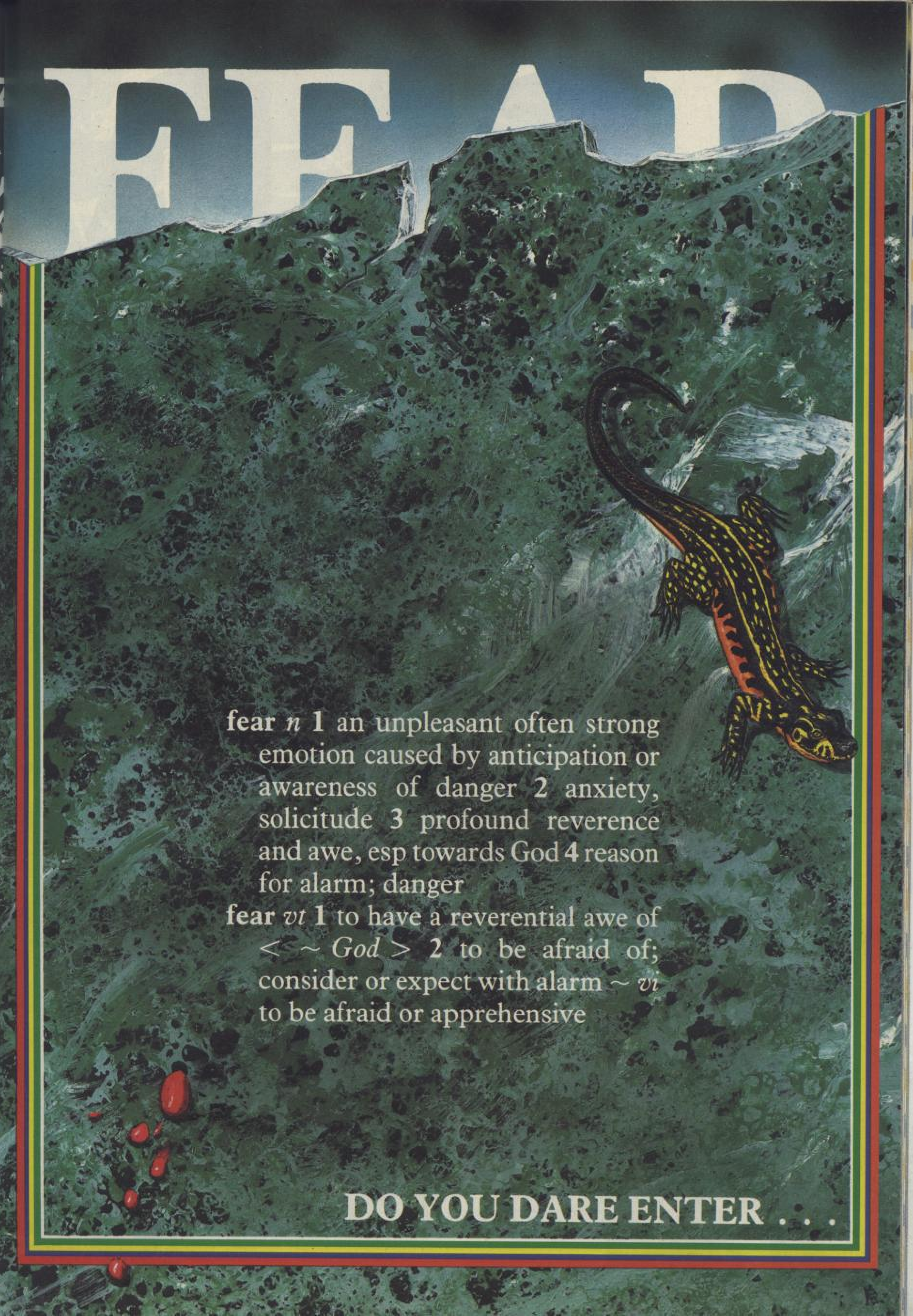
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FEAR
fear n 1 an unpleasant often strong emotion caused by anticipation or awareness of danger 2 anxiety, solicitude 3 profound reverence and awe, esp towards God 4 reason for alarm; danger
fear vt 1 to have a reverential awe of < ~ God > 2 to be afraid of; consider or expect with alarm ~ vi to be afraid or apprehensive
DO YOU DARE ENTER . . .

FE

THE WORLD OF FANTASY AND HORROR . . .

FEAR is a stunning new magazine. A publication that will chart a wondrous course through the thrill of Fantasy, the dark dread of Horror and the mindblast of Science Fiction. These three related genres make up today's biggest single interest area in fiction, films and video, and now the essential reading companion to this absorbing world is here at last. A magazine created to reflect the atmosphere and colour, the frisson and savagery of the imagination of the world's great writers and directors.

In *Close Encounters Of The Third Kind*, when the gathered scientists all stare skywards as the vast mothership regally descends, the emotion writ large upon all their faces is one of **fear**. And yet, clearly, they are not terrorised, horrified or even frightened – they are in awe; and later, their state of awe turns to one of reverence at the astonishing event they are witnessing.

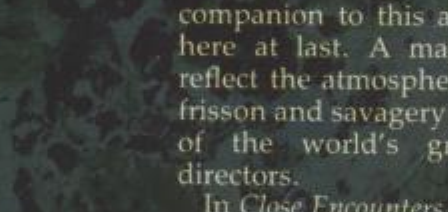
Yes, **fear** does mean the state of mind traditionally associated with the word, but it also implies awe, reverence and – most importantly – wonder.

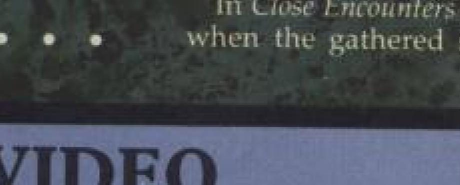
FEAR is a publication that will keep you informed, is bound to make you think – and will definitely chill your bones. It will be Britain's glossiest and most stylish Fantasy and Horror magazine ever – so let it gnaw its way into your life . . .

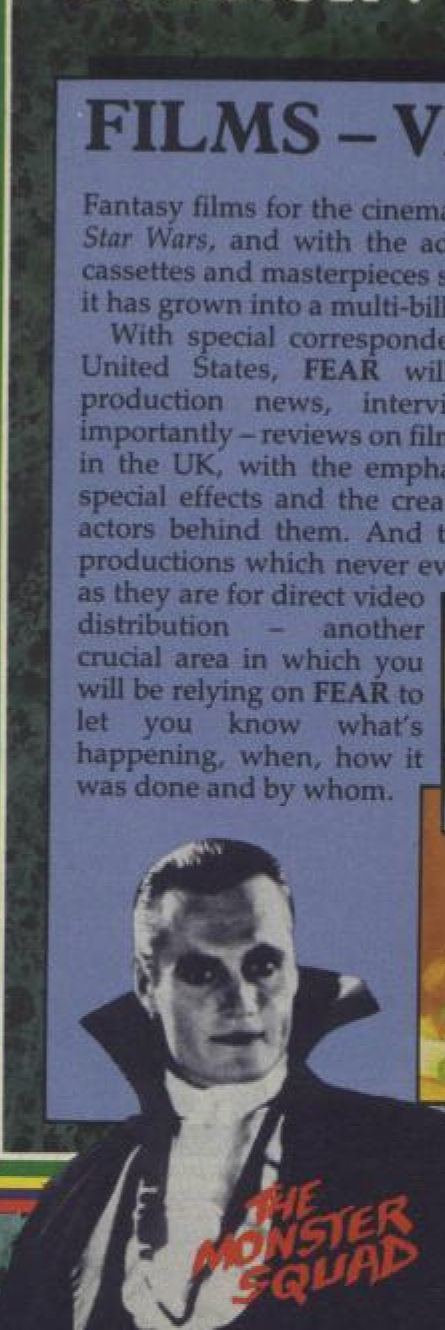
FILMS – VIDEO

Fantasy films for the cinema have been big box-office since *Star Wars*, and with the advent of the video player, hire cassettes and masterpieces such as *Halloween* and *Hellraiser*, it has grown into a multi-billion dollar affair.

With special correspondents already in position in the United States, **FEAR** will bring you the very latest production news, interviews, profiles and – most importantly – reviews on films well before they are available in the UK, with the emphasis on plots, implementation, special effects and the creative drive of the directors and actors behind them. And that's not forgetting the many productions which never even reach the cinema, intended as they are for direct video distribution – another crucial area in which you will be relying on **FEAR** to let you know what's happening, when, how it was done and by whom.





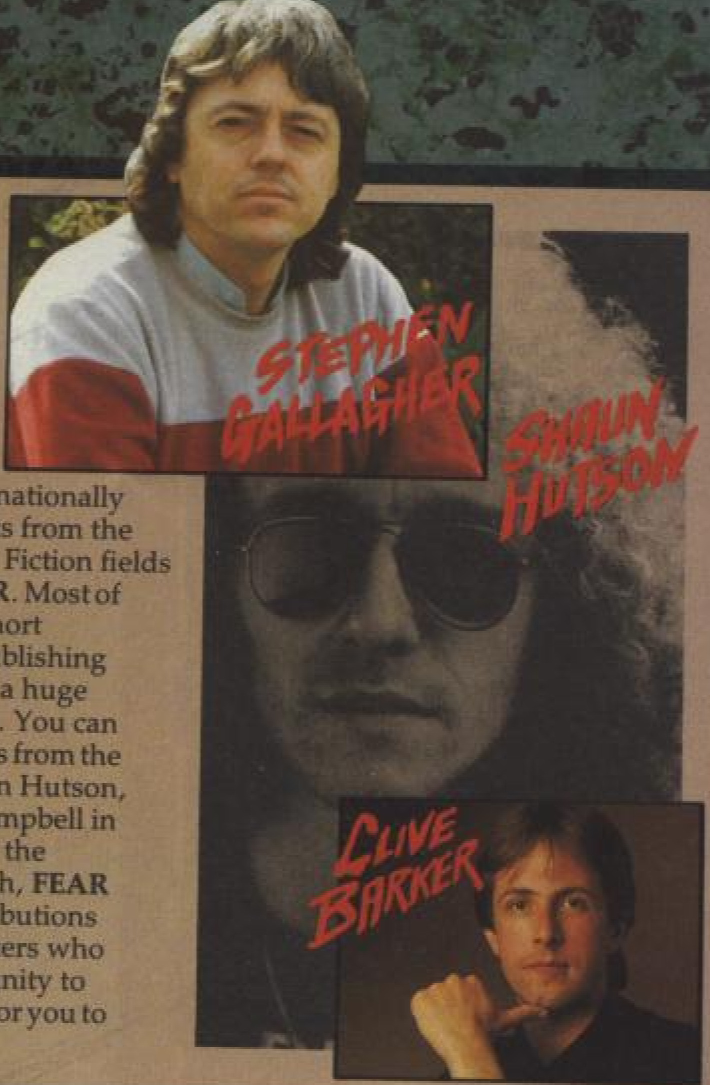


BOOK REVIEWS

Films may be the most obviously visual outward expression of the Science Fiction, Fantasy and Horror genres, but the heart and core is its literature. Hundreds of titles are released every year, forming one of the largest slices of the book market – yet there has been almost nowhere for you to read reviews – until now. **FEAR** will be in the forefront of bringing you authoritative reviews of the very latest fiction from both sides of the Atlantic, often using well-known novelists as critics. And **FEAR** won't be ignoring the news element, letting you know what to expect and look out for in the world of books.



FICTION



One unique aspect to **FEAR** will be immediately apparent: fiction. For the first time in years, **FEAR** will represent a vital outlet for short stories. We are commissioning internationally famous, best-selling novelists from the Fantasy, Horror and Science Fiction fields to write short stories for **FEAR**. Most of these authors love writing short stories, yet have very few publishing outlets for them and there is a huge readership begging for them. You can certainly expect to read stories from the pens of writers such as Shaun Hutson, Clive Barker and Ramsey Campbell in the first few issues. Not only the famous are catered for though, **FEAR** will also be looking for contributions from outstanding young writers who have not yet had the opportunity to publish – a chance, perhaps, for you to shine as well!

CLASSIFIEDS

You will want to contact thousands of other like-minded readers with low-cost small ads, whether you want to buy, swap or sell something, find pen-pals, discover access to private collections of knowledge for research purposes, advise others of club and society activities or let them know about your fanzines. **FEAR**'s reader classified section will probably be the best way of doing it, and you can place a small ad for as little as £3.00 for 35 words (and a better deal exists for **FEAR** subscribers). The Personal classifieds are not open to trade advertising, but small ad semi-display rates are available on request.

FEAR is a bi-monthly magazine from Newsfield, publishers of Britain's top computer titles CRASH, ZZAP!64 and THE GAMES MACHINE, and edited by John Gilbert who has been reviews editor for SINCLAIR USER, regular contributor to THE GAMES MACHINE and now brings his considerable knowledge and love of Fantasy and Horror to what will prove to be the most exciting and vital new publication this year.

FEAR is a not-to-be-missed experience in terror and awe, wonder and excitement, and it starts on June 16, priced £2.50 – with extra special subscriber discounts – see the details!

In your first issue:

THEY LIVE!
Film maker John Carpenter on his latest offering PRINCE OF DARKNESS

SKIPP and SPECTOR
Brilliant new writing duo from the States, tell all on their new book THE SCREAM, and their collaboration with CLIVE BARKER on the forthcoming film THE BRIDGE

OKTOBER
Best-selling author STEPHEN GALLAGHER quizzed on his new hardback offering and VALLEY OF LIGHTS – out in paperback

NEIL JORDAN
The creator of COMPANY OF WOLVES on his latest offering

CUT!
We find out how the British Board of Film Censors decides on what we are allowed to see – and your chance to air your views!

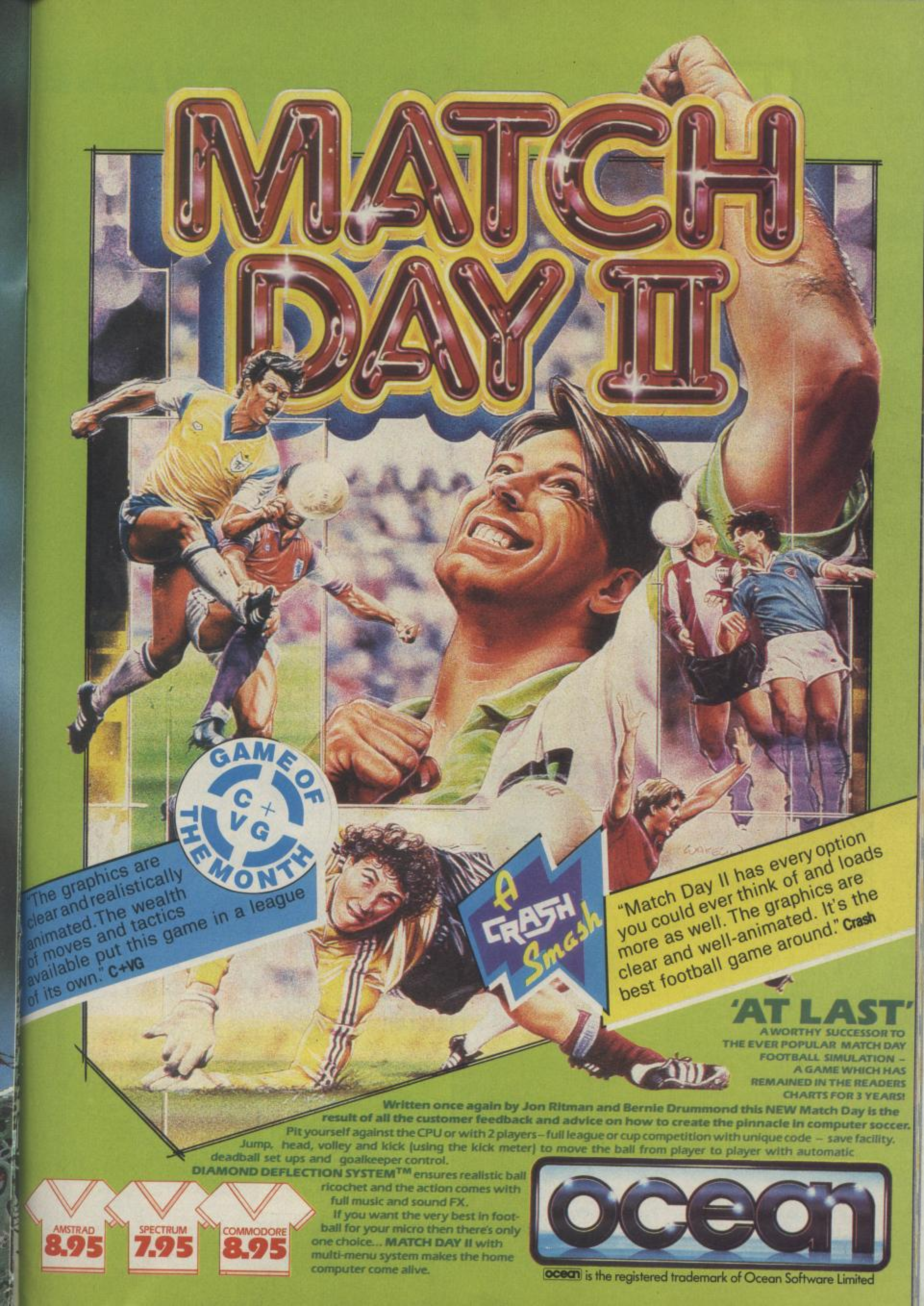
FEAR FICTION!
When little girls want revenge, teachers should beware
THE EYE OF CHILDHOOD
Ramsey Campbell paints in blood . . .

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THE DANDELYON WOMAN
SF terror from Nicholas Royle

And a mystery story (he won't tell) from
Shaun Hutson

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NEWS AND PREVIEWS from both Britain and the States on novels and films we can expect to see later this year
HOW TO MAKE A MOVIE
COMPETITIONS galore, with some very strange and exciting prizes
FAN CLUB profiles, news and events guide and introducing:
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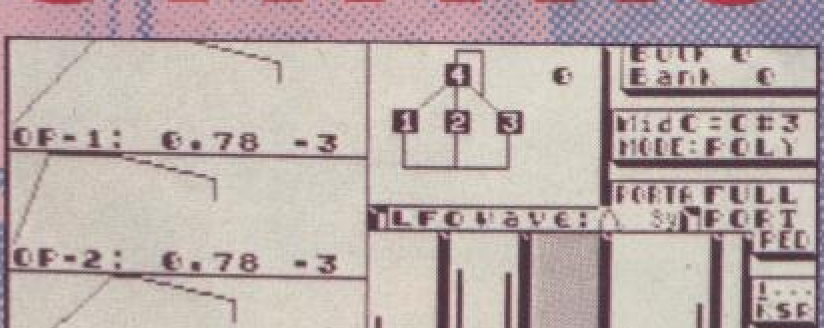
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"Match Day II has every option you could ever think of and loads more as well. The graphics are clear and well-animated. It's the best football game around." Crash
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TECH NICHE



JON BATES discards his blood-stained Marigold gloves in favour of a DX programmer and an equally blood-stained letter-opener . . .

HOUSEHOLD HINTS AND SYNTHS



HEY! I'm beginning to like this magazine – they've even got hold of pictures of my, sorry, *our* house for my articles.

Whilst hunting through the waste bins in some of the cabins of the motel, I found wrapped up in a three-day old copy of the Los Angeles Times the most marvellous DX21/27/100 programmer. It's the one released from Quasar software and in comparison with some of the supposedly upmarket software for 16-bit machines it takes quite a bit (pun accidental) of beating; in short it was better. And you get a whole load of new sounds to boot – about 150 in all.

Quasar have taken a very visual approach to the program. Following a loading screen, the main work area pops up. Down the left hand side of the screen appear graphic wave displays of the envelopes for the four operators (I make no apologies for not going through an FM synth primer as there is a time and place for everything – and this ain't either. Sorry.) Underneath that is a scrolling window through which access can be gained to all the functions – basically either editing or transferring to and from the library, tape or the synth. Just to left of centre, a set of four vertical bars show you the relative outputs of each operator in the form of bar graphs of the levels which are essential to the final sound. This principle follows through in the smaller areas on the right hand side of the screen. A display at the top centre of the screen shows the algorithm defining the configuration of the operators currently in use. The tiny little figure to it's right is in fact the level of feedback set on operator four and not, as I thought, the algorithm number. At the top of the screen is the name ascribed to the sound.

In edit mode you can move around the different sections, each being highlighted in yellow when activated. One small niggle here is that you can only run round the screen in one preset order; since editing is usually a matter of fine tuning just a few peripherals, dodging between two or three alternately, this editing procedure proved a little constricting. What, I wondered, were the chances of having it work from the cursor arrows – or even better, the joystick control?

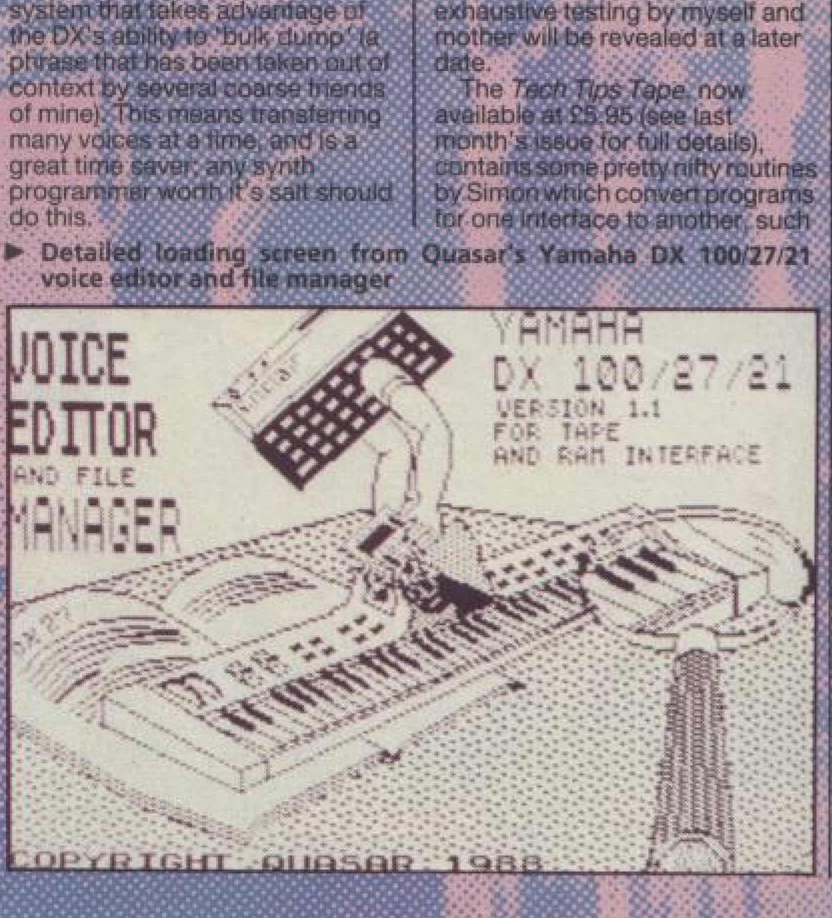
However, this is only a minor hiccup in what is a very excellent utility. I particularly liked the ability to get the DX to play either melody, chords or bass from an on-screen command. It would have been even better if, after each edit alteration, it sent a single note command so that you didn't have to keep taking your hands off to see what the editing alterations were. It has a copious and very neat file/voice management system that takes advantage of the DX's ability to 'bulk dump' (a phrase that has been taken out of context by several coarse friends of mine). This means transferring many voices at a time, and is a great time saver; any synth programmer worth it's salt should do this.

All files and voices can be saved to tape, but Quasar have not simply stopped there. You find, on consulting the handbook, (which although tacky and rather quaintly spelt is very straightforward) that the program is adaptable to a large degree. It can be obtained in a variety of permutations: RAM or MICON (XRI) interfaces, 128 or Interface 1 network and will store on cassette, Microdrive, OPUS Discovery, Disciple, MGT Plus D or the +3. So pay yer money and take yer choice; it's a snip at £9.99.

Quasar are at pains to let you know that they have been on the move and can now be sent lots of money at their new address listed at the end of the article. Soon they will send me a DX7 programmer for review and the results of exhaustive testing by myself and mother will be revealed at a later date.

The *Tech Tips Tape*, now available at £5.95 (see last month's issue for full details), contains some pretty nifty routines by Simon which convert programs for one interface to another, such

► **Detailed loading screen from Quasar's Yamaha DX 100/27/21 voice editor and file manager**



as transferring from the Specdrum to the Ram Music Machine. Taking this a bit further, 'RAMM' (the Music Machine user club) will be releasing details of interface ports that should enable any MIDI program to run on any MIDI interface when subjected to the conversion program.

MOTEL MAIL BOX

And now to the tottering pile of mail. Some of you have been forcing your eyelids to stay open by fair means or foul judging by the programs that have dropped through the Motel mail box. Out of all the music tunes and tapes that have been sent, I think the prize for the best goes to **Michael Martin** from Cwmbran in Gwent. He has worked overtime to present a decently displayed and ordered music program that selects loads of tunes, some nice voices and effects, plus a listing of how to achieve some of the effects on the 128. He also asks me for a few tips on music programming. Basically the only hiccups that occur in his program are one of note timing. To Michael, I would suggest that you take a good look at a good arrangement of the song you want the 128 to perform and then work it out so that you can do it in two or three simultaneous parts, again working from a printed arrangement. If you are not sure where to begin, see if you can get someone who can play well to check your note values. In general this applied to all the tapes sent in.

The other problem is that some combinations of voices cause additional unwanted harmonies to be generated when the parts are too close together. Although this can be turned to your advantage to create effects, it is generally unwanted when playing tunes. Anyway, I shall be offering our new editor the choice of staying a few days at the motel or shoving some software/tech tips tape your way as a prize!

Please keep on sending your tapes in. I stress TAPES as I haven't got 365 days a week to write in each tune individually. Send your tape, marked up clearly with your name, and also send a listing, preferably printed, of your best tune. I'm afraid that utilities or tunes that are not on data or audio tape cannot be considered.

PROBLEMS? – WHAT PROBLEMS?

David Johnson from Lifton, Devon, wants to know if there is a way of connecting an 'ordinary' synth without MIDI to a MIDI interface. This is a fairly common query and so to you all I say: tell me EXACTLY what the synth is and I'll than be able to tell you if there are kits available to convert them. Some synths can be converted to send and receive note information, but as there was no universal standard in the pre-MIDI era than without the info I can't help you. Certainly some of the more popular synths do have MIDI conversion kits available from various small companies.

P J Gaywood from Tilbury in Essex, wants to know several things: first of all, he likes having music notation on screen; for this I have yet to see a program to better *Music Typewriter* from Romantic Robot. This was first reviewed aeons ago by me in issue 16 and is still the best display around although it only runs in 48K. Furthermore, he would like some kind soul to devise a program that enables him to use the qwerty keys on his 128 like a musical keyboard and which will also provide him with a pitch bender like a synthesizer. This shouldn't be too hard to achieve – now there's a little task that for someone to program up and send in. All successful programs get listed.

Roger Mepham from London is after pokes and routines for the RAM Music Machine. Roger also has a Casio DG20 keyboard and a Yamaha TX81Z tone module – the latter is rapidly gaining in popularity over the FB01. Now by a strange and uncanny coincidence, I am eagerly expecting a voicing program for the TX81Z to drop through my letter box. It is configured for the XRI interface but a word or two to the 'RAMM' Club should provide you with pokes and the conversion routines for the Music Machine. A review of the TX81Z program will form a major part of next month's offering.

Finally, Roger wants to know how to interface his Music Machine, tone module and Casio keyboard to get sequences, real-time play, plus some control devices for pitch change. The control devices you talk about are usually hardware boxes costing several hundred pounds (the Yamaha MEP4, for example) but I would think that the Casio should be able to send the codes itself – I have not been able to locate a DG20 for some personal hands-on assaulting. It sounds, however, as if the interfacing could be achieved by either very carefully manufacturing a split MIDI lead yourself or by purchasing a split box; the best one is by Phillip Rees. Below is a diagram of the suggested configuration.

Look forward to you visiting the motel in about a month's time.

CRUCIAL ADDRESSES

Phillip Rees: FREEPOST, *Brackley, Northants NN13 5BR.*
RAMM User Club (new address): *1 Hill Crest Court, Shoot Up Hill, London NW2 3PG.* Tel 01 452 1916
Quasar (new address): *60 Bowsprit Point, Melish Street, London E14 8NU.* Tel 01 987 3908

TECH TIPS

SPRING SURPRISES



Spring has been fruitful for the Spectrum market this year, with a flood of new +3 utilities, a conversion of ZX BASIC for the Amstrad CPC range, and signs of Amstrad's long-forecast shift into the computer-music market. SIMON N GOODWIN reports

ORIGINAL SOFTWARE for the Spectrum +3 is flooding onto the market at last. In the last few days I've received three new serious programs from Tasman Software, a clutch of utilities from ZX Guaranteed, and news of the latest +3 titles from Lerm, Betasoft and HiSoft.

Most importantly, Locomotive Software have at last put the CP/M Plus operating system on the Spectrum. This move has been predicted since 1982, although it was not technically feasible until the launch of the +3. CP/M doubles the size of the Spectrum's software-base at a stroke, and changes the +3 from a specialist games box into a bargain-priced general-purpose computer.

At last it looks as if the +3 is here to stay, despite its high price, technical quirks and lack of compatibility with older Spectrums. Software houses are breaking away from the 'toy market' image, taking advantage of the +3's standard ports, and bringing Spectrum users 'serious' applications software.

It's not yet clear how this will affect the main Spectrum market. Machine-specific games will always dominate Spectrum software sales by volume, because – as publishers know well – they are disposable products in an ever-changing fashion market.

The +3 is a valuable part of Amstrad's range, but it's a hybrid product: a CPC/Spectrum clone rather than a true Spectrum. At least for the time being, if you only want to use Spectrum-specific hardware and software, you're better off with a +2 and a Plus D or Swift Disk – but the +3 is gaining a unique character.

It's interesting that Amstrad have put the price of the PCW 8256 range up to around twice that of the +3; they seem to be protecting the Spectrum's status on the borderline between games and serious computing.

There are strong signs that Amstrad have chosen a new direction for their mass-market entertainment products. If you've been paying attention over the last three years you will not be surprised to hear that they're moving into music-making. DIY music is going to be a very, very big hobby, and an extension of home computing as distinct and popular as game playing or word processing.

After the +2A – the +3 with cassette – it looks as if the +4 will have add-on music hardware, probably similar to the RAM Music Machine hardware designed by ex-Sinclair staff at Flare Technology. No-one – even at Amstrad – knows when this will appear as I write, and the first Amstrad home-made music product is not a computer.

The Studio 100 started to get TV advertising in April, when it reached a few high-street shops. It's a four track tape recorder, which lets you build up a stereo recording from up to 10 parts, recorded separately. It also includes a six channel mixer, to combine sounds and effects, four grotty microphones, speakers, uncomfortable headphones, an echo generator and a complete music centre – including a second tape deck, turntable and a three-band stereo tuner.

There's an ominous 'DATA' connector on the back, and the manual – by +2 manual editor Ivor Spital – just hints that it is 'reserved for future Amstrad add-on products' – believe it!

The Studio 100 is a fabulous peripheral for a sampler or SpecDrum. At £300 it's an expensive toy, but excellent value. The sound quality is not brilliant, but tolerable, as you'd expect from Amstrad.

At first, the Studio 100 is sure to sell well for other reasons. Staff in my local Currys cynically reckon most punters won't know what it's for, but they'll buy it because it has more knobs and switches than anything else in the shop: 33 knobs, 7 faders, 22 switches, 21 buttons, 17 sockets and a lever!

Once people have got it, they won't be disappointed, as long as they can find time to play with it. We can expect a steady stream of interactive music products from Amstrad within the next few years. ▶

CP/M EMANCIPAT

DESPITE ITS SUCCESS in the specialist games market, the Spectrum has always been a general-purpose computer. Until recently it has been handicapped by an obscure operating system, no standard disks and a limited home TV display resolution. Locomotive Software have addressed all three of these problems with the launch of CP/M Plus for the +3.

CP/M HISTORY

When micros first appeared, models were all totally incompatible, like game machines today. After a while people decided it was a waste to rewrite programs for every new machine, so they dug out a program written in 1974 that would control disks and a simple display on ANY computer with an 8080 processor, or its souped-up successor the Z80. The program was called *Control Program/Monitor*, or CP/M for short.

CP/M was important because it mean that programs could be written once and work on lots of different machines without changes. All the machine-specific bits were handled by calling the control program. This was a bit slow and restrictive – it ruled out graphics and sound – but it was worth it, because thousands of CP/M programs were written – programming tools, business software, and text games like adventures. Many programs are available at just the cost of a disk and duplication – just a few pounds – from legal 'public domain' software libraries like PD-SIG (Tel: 0896 63298).

SPECTRUM CP/M

Spectrum CP/M only runs on the +3. It consists of a single three inch disk, brimful with 346K of files on both sides, and a hefty manual. It loads from the +3 'loader' option in about ten seconds, plus another ten while it automatically configures the serial port and an 11K RAM disk (drive C).

Once CP/M is loaded you have about 61K of fast memory free for programs, with no need for 'paging'. Usually on a +3 the screen and ROM mean you only have about 40K free in one space, plus a 64K RAM disk. In CP/M up to 15K of otherwise unused memory can work as a fast but small simulated disk – useful when copying small files with only one drive. The rest of the 128K contains the code of CP/M, which runs entirely independently of the Spectrum ROM.

CP/M COMMANDS

Spectrum CP/M Plus has 37 standard commands, but there's no maximum – the package includes facilities to make your own commands, in BASIC, machine code or by chaining together existing ones. If you type a word CP/M doesn't know, it automatically looks for a file of that name and either executes it – if it's a program – or reads commands from it as if you typed them – if the file contains text. This simple scheme is very powerful.

+3 CP/M initially recognises 15 'housekeeping' commands. The simplest is TYPE, which shows a named file on the screen, waiting for a key between pages.

You enter DIR to find the names of disk files. DIR takes about 3·5 seconds to read and display a directory of 27 files – plus an extra eight seconds if you've just changed the disk, and the computer needs to update its record of the disk structure.

DIR (SIZE) uses the separate DIR utility program, and takes nine seconds to load that 15K program, read the same directory, sort it into alphabetical order and display it over 31 lines.

DIR work on +3 DOS disks, but TYPE – like most commands – can only decipher the data on CP/M disks. It just plaintively prints PLUS3DOS if you ask it to look at a file created by +3 BASIC.

SHOW tells you the amount of space in a drive. DATE lets you read and set the date and time, used to mark files. The rather rudimentary +3 hardware means that the clock loses time when the disk is accessed. The date reverts to Christmas 1982 whenever you reset the system.

ERASE and RENAME let you remove files from a disk or change their names. SET can protect a file from ERASE. Names can include 'wildcard' characters, as in +3 DOS, so you can use one command to process several files with similar names.

DISCKIT copies disks. It takes about two minutes to copy a 173K disk on a single drive computer – a minute to read and write the data, plus another minute for you to swap the disks back and forth eight times.

PIP is the rather clumsy 'Peripheral Interchange Program'. It lets you copy files back and forth between disks, the screen, serial and parallel ports – but not MIDI, which did not exist when CP/M was designed.

OTHER COMMANDS

There are ten configuration commands. For example, the PALLETTE command lets you set the foreground and background colours; the default is white on blue. The other 12 commands are only briefly mentioned in the manual – they are 'advanced programming tools' – well, they were when CP/M was invented, but today they seem a bit crude.

ED is the standard CP/M line editor, and is horrible; not much better is RPED, a screen-editor for up to 200 lines of text, written by Amstrad in protected BASIC. It's simple to use but very rudimentary, and won't let you copy or move information between lines. RPED is alright if you just want to write a few command-files, but it's not much good for programming.

You get two assemblers – for the 8080 processor rather than the Z80 – and can try them out by assembling the well-commented RAM disk source code provided. All the 8080 instructions run on the Z80, but they have different mnemonic names so the source looks pretty odd! To make things even stranger, the program uses Z80 codes which the 8080 couldn't handle, and these are 'defined' as bytes and words in the program. Even so, it's an interesting example.

KEYBOARD

Like ZX BASIC, CP/M is usually controlled by typing commands at the keyboard. However, CP/M lets you change the characters produced by every key, and there's a massive character set, including foreign accents and loads of weird squiggles.

Some commands use the square and curly brackets, which Amstrad didn't mark on the keyboard. Locomotive have positioned these sensibly on unused pairs of symbol-shifted keys. BREAK is the equivalent of CP/M's 'Escape', and EDIT usefully recalls the last list entered for editing – try doing that in GEM or on an Apple Mac!

EXTEND works as a 'control' key so, for example, Control S and Control Q stop and start scrolling; the TRUE and INVERSE VIDEO keys give the same effect more conveniently.

You can divert input and output to any device with commands. If you've got a printer connected, Extend P is a convenient way to copy all display output to it.

Keys repeat, without over-running, when you hold them down for a while, but there's no key-click, and on this early review version the cursor disappeared annoyingly when the arrow keys were held down. At first, Locomotive Software excused this on the grounds that they tried to make the screen display fast, and no-one complained about this bug on earlier Amstrad CP/M machines. Since then, Locomotive have relented and the latest versions of CP/M do not have this cursor problem.

You can 'type ahead' while commands are running. Sometimes the characters you enter get lost, but usually they appear on the next command-line. The effect

TION

depends on what the computer is doing, but it's a useful feature when you get used to its quirks.

The line editor lets you move back and forth through up to 239 characters of command and 'parameters', adding and deleting at will. Unfortunately you can't edit characters unless they're on the same display line as the cursor.

MALLARD BASIC

Mallard BASIC is a 28K code file. It loads from the CP/M command level in about 5·5 seconds, leaving just over 30K for file-buffers, variables and your program.

Mallard BASIC is aimed at serious programmers, and is very like IBM's GW BASIC or Microsoft's MBASIC. You enter program lines of up to 255 characters, but the syntax isn't checked at once, as it would be in ZX BASIC. If a mistake is found when the line is executed, you are then thrown into the line editor.

The BASIC editor works like the CP/M command editor, with extra tricks to move up and down between screen lines, search for a specific character, and delete or overwrite chunks of text. You must tell it the width of the screen line with the WIDTH command before it will work in 32-column or 80-column mode, or strange things can happen!

In BASIC, the keyboard functions are sadly inconsistent with the CP/M command level – a common problem with early operating systems where every program has its own conventions. EXTEND A works like EDIT in CP/M, recalling the last line as long as you have not yet started to enter a new command. BREAK is ignored, but EXTEND C will stop your program unless you've protected against it.

Control G is the only way to make a sound, unless you resort to OUT instructions to control the speaker directly. Type Control G in BASIC, to hear a simple 'beep' sound. In CP/M this only makes a sound when you print the character – not when you type it.

Display control is rudimentary, with no graphics commands at all. You have to print control characters to change colours, move the cursor or clear the screen. In ZX BASIC you'd type CLS, but in Locomotive BASIC you must use terminal control codes: PRINT CHR$(27);"H";CHR$(27);"J". This gibberish means your programs will work on most other CP/M machines, and suits the IBM PC or Amstrad PCW, both of which run Mallard BASIC and use the same control codes.

Mallard BASIC allows four different data-types. Integers – whole numbers between -32768 and 32767 – are more concise and slightly faster than other numeric types and are particularly useful for array subscripts. Maths functions like SIN and LOG use the default seven-digit floating point 'single precision', and real number-crunchers can add, subtract, multiply and divide 16-digit 'double precision' numbers. You pay for the precision in time and memory.

Variable names can be as long as you like, but strings are limited to 255 characters, unlike ZX BASIC. Locomotive BASIC has the big advantage that you don't have to tell the system the maximum length of string array variables.

Like Microsoft and ZX BASIC, but unlike more modern BASICs, Mallard BASIC is not well-suited to structured programming. There's IF . . . THEN . . . ELSE, which can be nested but must be on one line, and WHILE . . . WEND for loops that start with a test.

Unlike +3 BASIC, Mallard has proper file-handling and lets you trap errors, mask the bits of integer values, search strings and trace the current line-number. Overall it's much more like Fortran than Pascal, although when it comes to program development it has the edge over both those languages in that it is interpreted, and you can edit and test the code very quickly.

Sadly, there's no compiler available. Locomotive say, unconvincingly, that their interpreter is as fast as other people's compilers. Methinks they expect people to use other languages if they need the speed of compiled code.

Three file-handling schemes give you most of the traditional data-processing options, including sophisticated ISAM (Indexed Sequential Access Method) files, usually only found on big multi-user systems.

You can manipulate normal text files, printing lines then reading them back, one by one, in order. Alternatively you can use 'random access', dividing a preset file space into fixed-sized sections, called 'records'. Later you can tell the system to GET or PUT collections of text and numbers in any section in the file, just by supplying the appropriate record number.

ISAM files come in two parts – one file contains the data, as in a random file, and another file, the 'index', contains labels or 'keys' used to access the data. You no longer need slot numbers, as you can associate any number of keys – strings of up to 31 characters – with any record in the data file. You can use up to eight independent indices with one file. ISAM files can save a lot of work, but it takes a while to get the hang of them and they tend to be wasteful of disk space.

You can't write a shoot 'em up in Mallard BASIC, but it's still a valuable addition to the Spectrum programmer's armoury.

CAN IT BE TRUE?

CP/M is no use unless the implementation is genuinely compatible with the thousands of programs available for the system. Spectrum CP/M has quirks, as you might expect, but it runs most CP/M programs.

The disks, at 173K, are small by modern standards, but many CP/M machines had even smaller drives – 88K was not unknown! CP/M software is often sold on 5·25 inch disks, but conversion is not too much of a problem, as lots of firms and interest groups can convert CP/M stuff for CPC and PCW computer users with three inch drives.

Spectrum CP/M seems to work fine with 173K Amstrad disks. Pro Pascal and Pro Fortran, for the PCW 8256, just plugged in and worked, although they were short of space for files on my single-drive +3.

Most CP/M systems had two drives. The +3 can run a plug-in drive B, but most people won't want to spend that much. Locomotive provide useful two-drive emulation on drive A – the system lets you use two disks in one drive, telling you when to swap them. But beware: this can get very tedious if the program is copying a file, one line at a time, from one disk to another! An optional status line, at the bottom of the screen, says which disk should be in the drive at any time.

Spectrum CP/M can display a maximum of 51 characters per line, or 32 per line with full colour control. Most CP/M packages expect an 80-column display. To get around this, Locomotive provide a simulated 80-column mode, showing 80 columns in two overlapping 51-column sections. There's a marker on the status line to show which side you're on. Flicking back and forth can follow the cursor, or be manually controlled. Either way it works with most packages, but makes some very hard to use.

Text output is slow: screen updates are about a third the speed of ZX BASIC, in both sizes; scrolling is about 60% of ZX BASIC speed in 51-column mode, but – bizarrely – only 44% of Sinclair's speed when scrolling a 32-column display.

CP/M uses two characters to mark the end of a line. Some printers only expect one, and give double-space output when you use them from CP/M. You can cure this by adjusting a switch inside your printer, unless you've got a really cheap and nasty model. You must use the serial or parallel ports – ZX and Alphacom printers won't work at all from CP/M.

DOCUMENTATION

The manual is in three sections: the first 100 A5 pages explain how you use the system – entering and editing commands, performing 'housekeeping' tasks such as copying and editing files and disks, and 'configuration' – customising the system to your favourite key-layout, language or printer. This part of the manual shows the benefits of CP/M's 14-year life and Locomotive's long experience of the system. It's clearly written, although a long and wordy read for anyone who doesn't like books. It's packed with little comments that show that the authors have actually done what they are writing about.

The next section, 160 pages long, covers Mallard BASIC. It's a tutorial introduction to the language – incomplete but quite a good 'taster'.

The tutorial is no substitute for a proper reference guide, so the £10 Mallard BASIC Reference Manual is probably a vital purchase if you're serious. It starts with a similar tutorial, followed by an extra 300-odd pages – methinks there's a frustrated blockbuster novelist at Locomotive Software.

The CP/M manual ends with over 100 pages of appendices, covering disk contents, keywords, machine code system calls, detailed device specifications and error messages. My pre-release copy lacked an index, which Locomotive will add in the final version. They recommend that techies buy the Digital Research CP/M Plus Manual, for further information about the programming tools and the design of the system.

VERDICT

At £30 for CP/M Plus, utilities, and Locomotive BASIC, this package is a bargain if you're at all interested in computers for their own sake.

CP/M Plus transforms the +3 from an ingenious but ageing games machine into an old-fashioned but useful non-specific computer SYSTEM. Like many others, I've found such systems a fascinating kind of general-purpose tool and toy to have around the house. It's fun, but it takes hundreds of hours to learn your way around such a system, and not everyone can be bothered.

Even if you don't want to be a hacker, you can be a 'power user' with CP/M, using whatever parts of it appear to run a customised computer system for work, business or fun. Suddenly there's more to be read in computer magazines, because you can run all the CP/M packages reviewed in CRASH, Amstrad magazines and multi-format titles like *Computer Shopper*. ▶

+3 PLETHORA

IN THE JULY issue I plan to survey lots of the +3 software previewed in this issue, concentrating on 'new' serious software – the business and programming tools that have been denied to Spectrum owners for the last five years. This will be good reading whether you've already got a +3, are thinking of upgrading, or just want to know what the new machine can do that the old Spectrum could not.

Don't be put off if you're still among the majority with a 48K system. I'll continue to cover the original Spectrum models, and cassette 128s, in this column. Next month I hope to announce some *Tech Tape* enhancements, and news of Lerm's cheap but powerful Z80 programming tape, set to break the monopoly of HiSoft's DevPac. Don't miss CRASH 54!

SUMMER-TEC

I'VE RECEIVED LOTS of new and revised +3 programs recently, so I'm planning an in-depth survey next month. For the moment, here's a taster . . .

HiSoft (Tel: 0525 718181) have new Pascal and C compilers, in two version. The +3 DOS versions support Spectrum colour and sound and cost £35. The CP/M compilers cost £50, but come with a screen editor and let you develop programs for other CP/M machines.

At the same high price they offer CP/M DevPac. That's the assembler they use to write their own programs, and has few of the annoying restrictions I found when I reviewed the Spectrum version in the March issue.

HiSoft also distribute CP/M compilers from other firms. Now you can run Astec standard C, Nevada Fortran and even Cobol on a Spectrum! Astec C is big, costs £80, and includes floating-point maths and a built-in assembler, unlike HiSoft C. The Nevada compilers are aimed at students and cost £40 each.

Tasman Software (Tel: 0532 438301), authors of the best-selling word processor *Tasword*, are taking the +3 seriously. They've a new version of *Tasword* on three-inch disk, and *TasSpell* – a computerised spelling-checker with a 70,000-word English dictionary.

Those two programs run on the +3 only, but *TasCalc* is a new spreadsheet calculating package for any 128K Spectrum; it's the only Sinclair spreadsheet that takes advantage of the extra memory on a Spectrum 128. *TasCalc* costs £18 on tape, or £20 – like the other Tasman +3 titles – on three-inch disk.

Lerm Software (Tel: 091 253 3615) are working on a +3 disk management package, and I've just received a bundle of disks from ZX Guaranteed (Tel: 061 766 5712). These included a rather limited disk doctor, file transfer utilities and simple database programs. Most interesting is '007 Menu', which lets you keep track of up to 2300 files in a 'directory of directories' on one disk.

CPC EMULATION

BETASOFT (Tel: 021 443 4620) hope to have +3 BetaBASIC finished in the next few weeks. They've been waylaid for a while by an experimental project – converting the ZX BASIC language to run on the Amstrad CPC range!

The resultant £9.95 program starts by loading a copy of the Spectrum's 16K ROM from tape. To avoid copyright problems, it's up to you to save the copy from your own Spectrum, by typing: SAVE 'ZX 48K ROM' CODE 0,16384

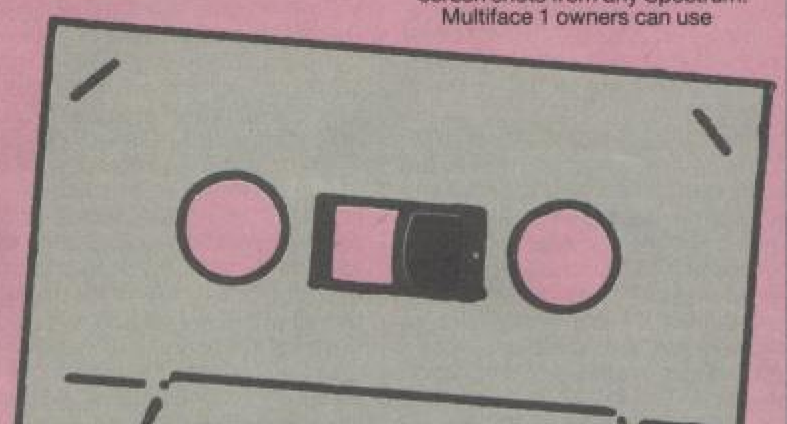
Betasoft's code can load and save Spectrum-format tape files on the CPC. ZX BASIC programs work fine, although slightly slower than they run on the Spectrum. PEEKs and POKEs are compatible, as are most ROM calls, but few machine code games will run because IN and OUT cannot find the Spectrum's keyboard and display ports. COPY drives any Epson printer.

There are two display modes. One lets you use four colours anywhere on the screen, with NO attribute clash. The other emulates the Spectrum display; again it only allows four colours with BRIGHT or FLASH but this time it simulates the effects of attribute clash, so that even POKEs to the display area work!

The CPC display uses 16K of memory, so it's not as fast as the Spectrum's 6·75K. 16K is taken from the program area on a 64K computer, so you can only get about 20K for ZX BASIC, but you get the full 41K Spectrum program are on a CPC 6128.

TECH TASTER

The Tech Tape is a compendium of useful BASIC and machine code routines, put together by CRASH readers and writers, aimed at everyone interested in Spectrum technicalities – there's lots of interest, whether you're a programmer, musician or user.



Programmers get ZIP2, a machine code BASIC compiler that can translate ZX BASIC to make it 200 times faster, and easy-to-use Turbo tape routines that let you LOAD AND SAVE headerless files at your choice of speed. The tape includes STAR BASE FOUR, a demonstration game that shows the speed of compiled code.

Also on the tape there's ZIP. BREAK, which lets you break into machine code programs, a clear new character set, and a routine that redirects BREAK and all ZX BASIC errors to your own error-trapping routine, helping you to produce reliable, professional 48K or 128K programs.

Apart from ZIP, all the routines can be stored anywhere in memory and easily configured to suit your system. Files are unprotected, with comments in the source code and 20 pages of detailed documentation supplied with each tape.

If you've got one of the cheap Serial 8056 printers IBM dumped onto the UK market a year or so ago, you need our relocatable screen COPY routine, which produces small or large (full-width) graphics screen shots from any Spectrum.

Multiface 1 owners can use 'Three in One' to run three different 16K BASIC or machine code programs on one 48K Spectrum, swapping between them at the press of the magic button!

The Tech Tape music routines are ideal for anyone with a Sampler or SpecDrum. The tape includes four excellent new percussion sounds, contributed by Cheetah Marketing, plus utilities to edit, hear and graph sampled sounds and convert SpecDrum samples to work with the RAM Music Machine.

There's full source and object code for ZX-FX, a utility that turns ANY Spectrum sampler into a real-time sound processor, with on-screen metering and three distinct effects.

The Tech Tape is only available from CRASH, and supplies are limited – so order yours today!

Please send me a CRASH Tech Tape.

I enclose a cheque or postal order for £5.95 (£7.95 if my address is outside the mainland UK) made payable to NEWSFIELD LTD, or I am paying by VISA or Access with the special form below.

NAME ....

ADDRESS ....

....

.... **POSTCODE** ....

PLEASE DEBIT MY VISA/ACCESS ACCOUNT £
(delete as applicable)

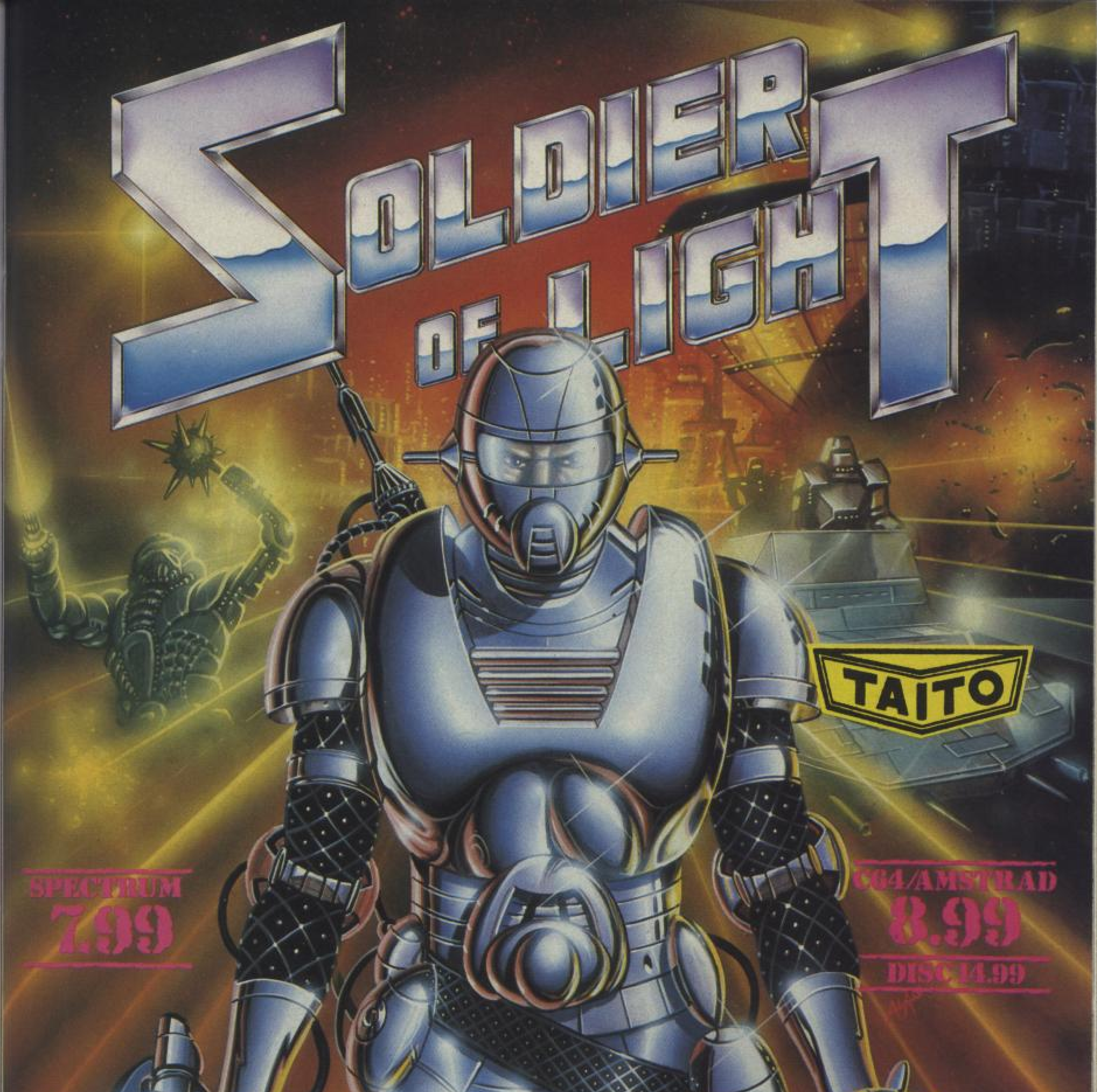
EXPIRY DATE ....

CARDHOLDER'S ADDRESS (if different from above)

ADDRESS ....

.... **POSTCODE** ....

SEND THIS FORM AND YOUR PAYMENT TO: TECH TAPE, CRASH, *PO BOX 20, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB*



screenshots from arcade machine



IT'S HOT!

Red hot from the arcades, this official Taito coin-op conversion is the greatest blast around!
Xain, your mission is to rid the galaxy of all the Federation's enemies!
Planet after planet of the greatest action you've ever experienced, and the most brilliant graphics you've ever seen!



ACE: the new name for the best in coin-ops!
Tel: 01 831 1801 Fax: 01 836 1725

ELITE DISH OUT THE GOODIES . . .

IN THIS FANTASTIC *BUGGY BOY* COMPETITION!

CRASH COMPETITION



WIN A SATELLITE DISH



AND TV TUNER!



Elite's *Buggy Boy* features some of the wildest, whackiest races ever run. Success over five different courses depends on a hair-raising combination of one-wheeled manouevres and split-second decisions at break-neck speed. You hurtle over precarious bridges, slalom through a series of hazardous gates and try to negotiate deep, dark tunnels without crashing your Baja Bug into the damp, forbidding walls.

The journey is risky, unreliable and definitely unsafe, but the rewards for the successful driver are great. His popularity soars, his buggy is crowned with glory and adoring onlookers go wild with appreciative joy.

This sort of madness is contagious, and Elite have certainly caught the bug. In an incredible, completely unrestrained fit of unbelievably magnanimous generosity they have agreed to give away an astonishingly valuable prize in return for the answers to a few triflingly easy questions.

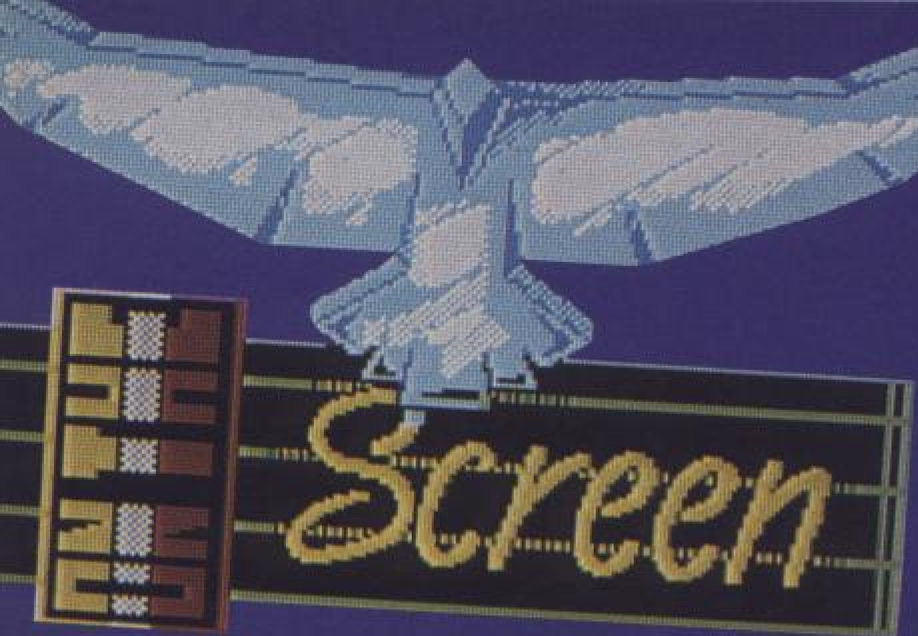
Have you ever sat in front of the box wishing there was more to the ageing tube than four channels? Have you heard about satellite TV, its multiple stations, 24 hours of films and pop videos and wondered wistfully what all the fuss was about? Well the time has come to wonder no more – just take a look at the questions below, scribble down the answers and within a few weeks you could be the proud owner of a Zeta Satellite Dish and TV tuner. As if that isn't enough Elite are also throwing in one year's subscription to *What Satellite* magazine, a copy of *Buggy Boy*, a T-shirt, mug and poster. **25** extra games, T-shirts, mugs and posters await the runners up.

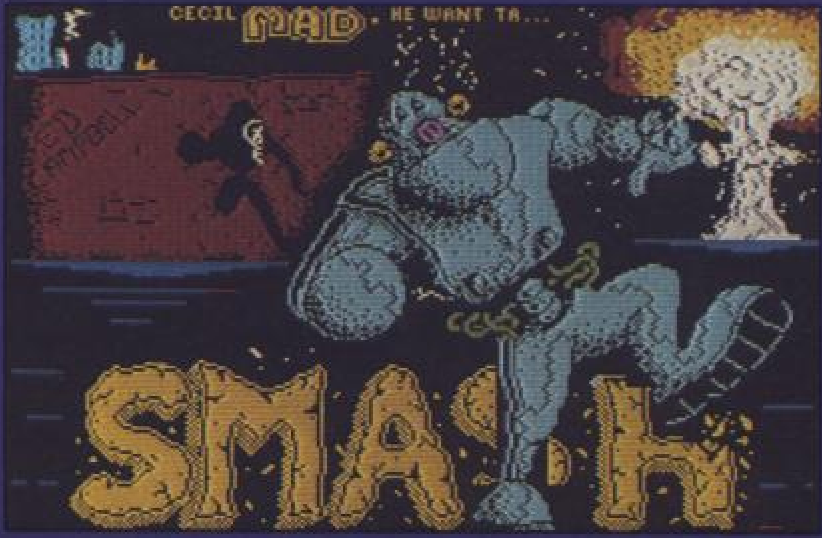
1 *What does the term satellite mean in astronomy?*
2 *What was the name of the first artificial Earth Satellite?*
3 *Who invented the communications satellite?*
4 *In what year was the first British satellite launched?*

Write your answers on a postcard or on the back of a sealed envelope, remembering to enclose your name and address, and send it to ***SAT-ELITE COMP, CRASH, PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB.*** All entries must be received by July 5. The decision of the appointed judges is final in all respects. So there.

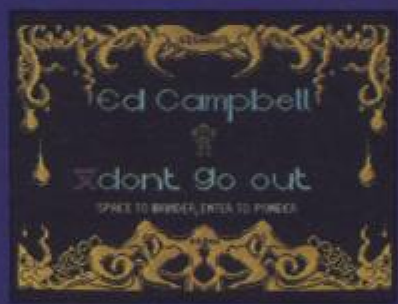

SMASHING IT'S WAY TOWARDS YOU!


Screen shots from ATARI ST version.
CASTLE SKETCH
DESOLATOR™
Out of the arcade into the computer... a fury of havoc and destruction straight from the Halls of Kairos.
CBM 64/128 £9.99c £14.99d
Amstrad £9.99c £14.99d
U.S. GOLD®
Spectrum 48/128K £8.99c +3 £12.99d
Atari ST £19.99d
U.S. Gold Ltd., Units 2/3 Holford Way, Holford, Birmingham B6 7AX. Tel: 021 356 3388







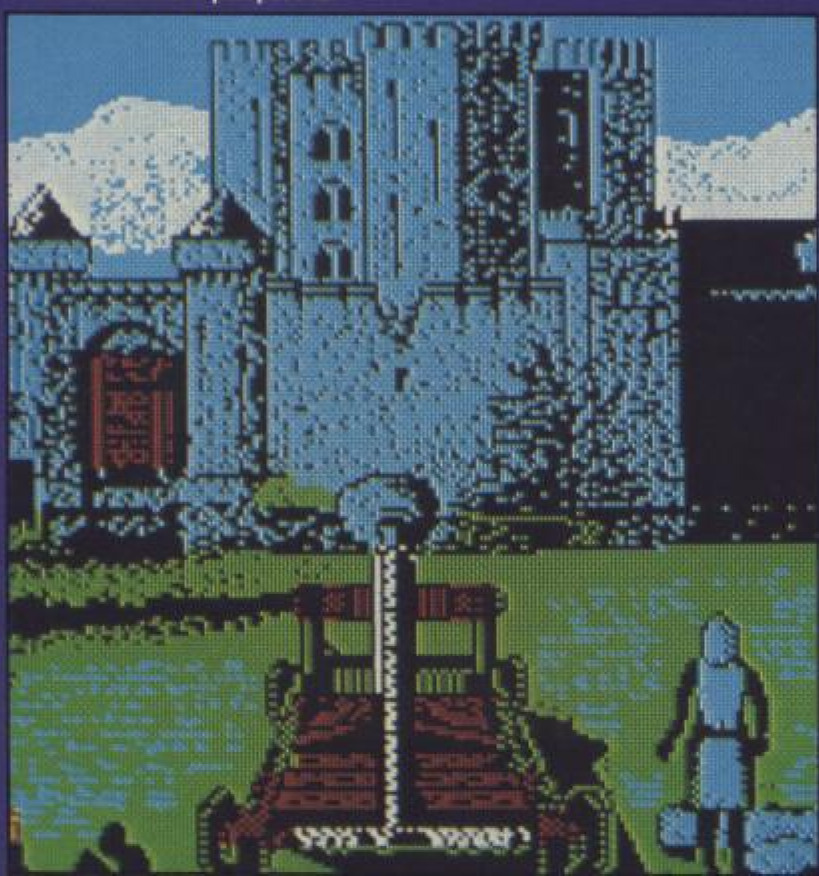


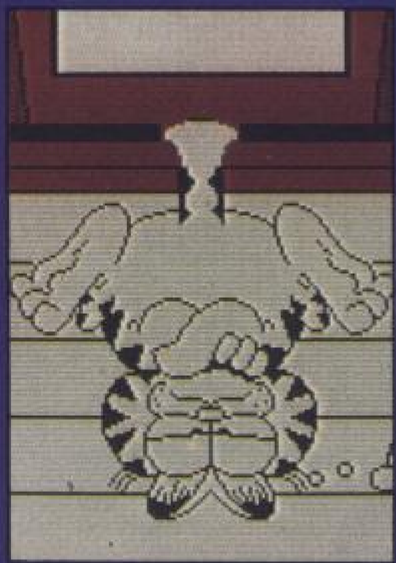
► Ed Campbell sent in a great collection of SCREEN$s, all joined together by an impressive animated title page. In his *Don't Go Out* picture, Ed creates an extremely atmospheric piece of artwork and his *Smash It Up* SCREEN$ combines humour and colour, resulting in a very lively picture.

After only one month looking at your pixelated pictures the unfortunate MARK 'Leonardo' CASWELL has fallen ill (although we don't think the two events are in any way connected – Ed). Holding the fort until Mark returns is DOMINIC HANDY . . .



▼ There's nothing more risky than trying to convert a super screen from a 16-bit computer to the humble Spectrum. But as 15-year-old David Coles of Thringstone in Leicestershire proves, the Spectrum is not so humble after all. His superb picture of the castle in the game *Defender Of The Crown* (yet to reach the Spectrum) gains him this month's £40 worth of software. His screen not only shows a clever mix of colour and detail, but also creates a tremendous 3-D perspective.







► There's nothing more risky than trying to convert a super screen from a 16-bit computer to the humble Spectrum. But as 15-year-old David Coles of Thringstone in Leicestershire proves, the Spectrum is not so humble after all. His superb picture of the castle in the game *Defender Of The Crown* (yet to reach the Spectrum) gains him this month's £40 worth of software. His screen not only shows a clever mix of colour and detail, but also creates a tremendous 3-D perspective.

Well, as our erstwhile editor Steve Jarratt always says, keep up the good work, and you might see yourself in ON THE SCREEN next month. Don't forget to include with your tape/disk a list of software that you'd like if your screen gets printed. Remember the new software prize? It's £40 worth of software for the best entry, and £10 worth for everyone else featured. And if you don't want me to keep your entries, you must send an SAE!

Keep your ego happy and your software collection bulging: send your screen dumps to MARK 'LEONARDO' CASWELL, ON THE SCREEN, CRASH, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB*. Read on for news of another tremendous art competition . . .

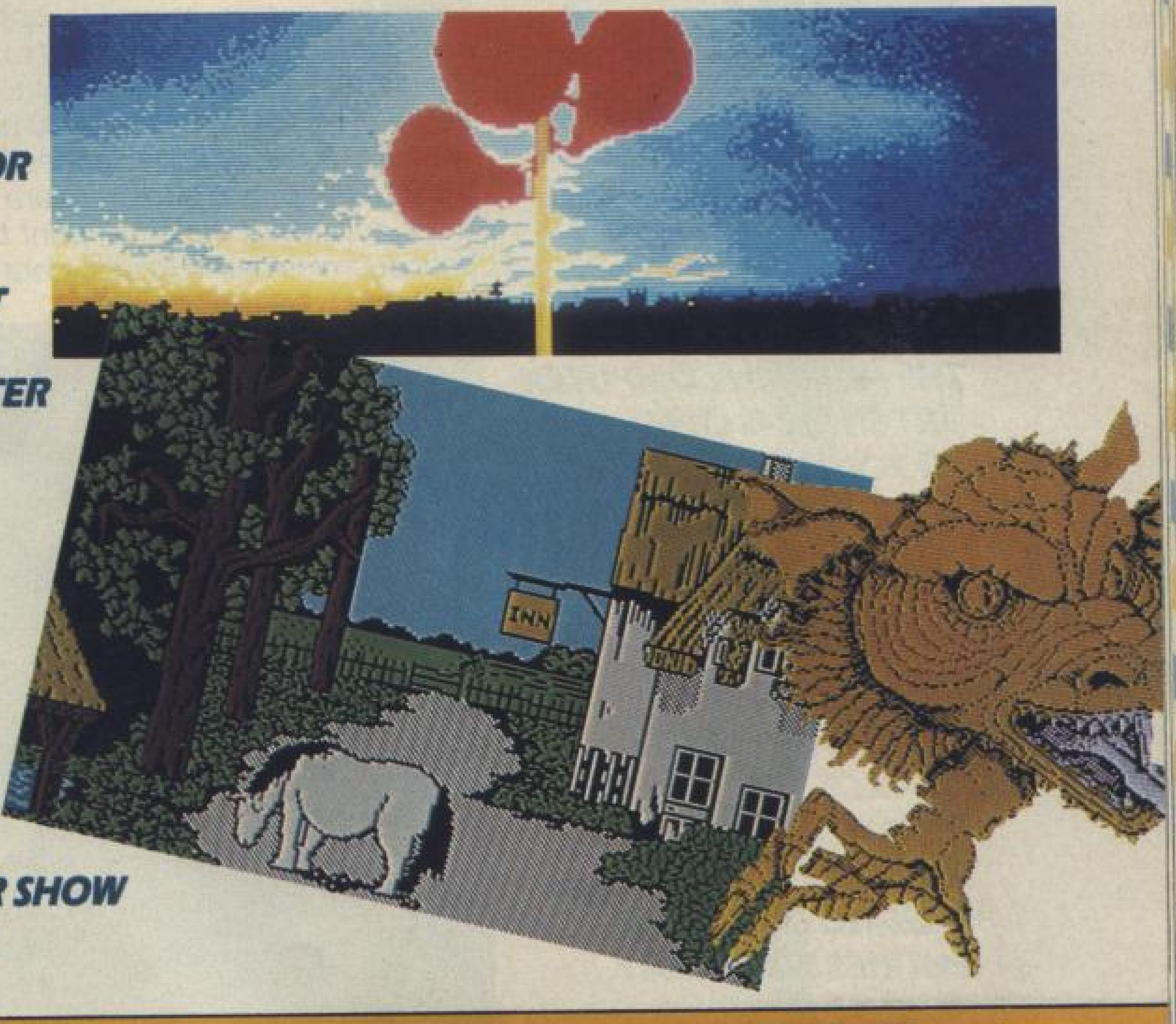
OLD WINNERS: The following people have as yet not received their prizes. All Issue 50's winners – that's **François Braid**; **Haken Strom**; **Anthony Henn** and **Mark Otway, plus SIMAC** (issue 45) and **Ed Campbell** (from this issue). Could they all send their names and addresses to Frances Mable at the usual address. Many thanks . . .

The Computer AUTUMN ART SHOW

Open to everyone . . . **at the PC Show**

Sponsored & Organised by CRASH, ZZAP! 64 and THE GAMES MACHINE

IF YOU ARE A SPECTRUM, AMIGA AMSTRAD CPC, IBM PC COMMODORE 64/128 OR ATARI ST OWNER, WHETHER YOU'RE A PROFESSIONAL ARTIST OR AN AMATEUR, THE AUTUMN COMPUTER ART SHOW IS OPEN TO YOU! THE FIRST PUBLIC EXHIBITION OF ART GENERATED ON HOME MICROS TAKES PLACE ON 16-18 SEPTEMBER AT EARLS COURT DURING THE 1988 PERSONAL COMPUTER SHOW START GETTING YOUR WORK READY NOW!



THE FORM IS BELOW (AND REPEATED NEXT MONTH) – DETAILS OVER THE PAGE . . . !

PERSONAL COMPUTER SHOW AUTUMN ART EXHIBITION 1988

I would like my computer art to be considered for entry Newsfield's Autumn Computer Art Exhibition at the PC Show, Earls Court.

Name ....

Address ....

....

.... Postcode ....

Phone Number ....

☐ I am over 18

☐ I am under 18, and my legal guardian has signed below

I have read the conditions of entry printed overleaf and agree to abide by them

Entrant's signature (or legal guardian) ....

Number of pieces submitted and computer:

☐ 1 machine: .... ☐ 2 machine: .... ☐ 3 machine: ....

Please state the titles of your submitted pieces (delete disk/cass as inapplicable), followed by the FILENAME and Utility used. Any special instructions for loading or use of self-designed utilities should be written out on a separate sheet.

Title 1: (disk/cass) .... Filename: .... Utility: ....

Title 2: (disk/cass) .... Filename: .... Utility: ....

Title 3: (disk/cass) .... Filename: .... Utility: ....

☐ I have enclosed a stamped addressed envelope for the return of disk/cassette

☐ I enclose extra payment for return package to be sent recorded/registered

Please ensure the form is correctly filled out, that your cassettes/disks are all labelled correctly as per instructions on the reverse of this form, and that you have signed the form. Then send it, together with any separate enclosures, disk(s) or cassette(s) to:

AUTUMN COMPUTER ART SHOW, NEWSFIELD PUBLICATIONS, PO BOX 10, LUDLOW, SHROPSHIRE SY8 1DB

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IF YOU ARE A SPECTRUM, AMIGA AMSTRAD CPC, IBM PC COMMODORE 64/128 OR ATARI ST OWNER, WHETHER YOU'RE A PROFESSIONAL ARTIST OR AN AMATEUR, THE AUTUMN COMPUTER ART SHOW IS OPEN TO YOU! THIS WILL BE THE FIRST LARGE PUBLIC EXHIBITION OF COMPUTER ART EVER MOUNTED IN BRITAIN, SO DON'T MISS THIS OPPORTUNITY OF A CHANCE TO SHOW YOUR BEST WORK TO AN ADMIRING PUBLIC! CLOSING DATE FOR ENTRIES IS MONDAY AUGUST 8.

From the entries received, approximately 30 works of art will be selected across all the formats by a panel of experts for exhibition at the 1988 Personal Computer Show at Earls Court. There, between September 16-18, over 60,000 people will visit the show and see your work if it is selected. And added to that thrill you will be able to sell your work to the public and there are prizes for the top entrants. So get to work now, read the small print below very carefully, please, and get your submissions in to us before the closing date.



PERSONAL COMPUTER SHOW AUTUMN ART EXHIBITION 1988

CONDITIONS OF ENTRY

1 The Personal Computer Show Exhibition sponsored and organised by Newsfield Publications is open to professionals and amateurs. The Professional Category includes persons who earn a living from designing computer-generated graphics for art purposes, television, advertisements, games or any form of commercial display.

2 All entrants must be over 18, or if under 18, must have the consent of their legal guardian and their entry form signed by their legal guardian.

3 Submitting work for the exhibition and returning a signed copy of the entry form will be deemed as acceptance of all of these conditions of entry contained herein.

4 Any art/graphics utility, whether commercially available or specially devised, may be used. But all submitted works must be static – animations will not be acceptable.

5 All work must be submitted on a suitable disk or cassette tape. In the event of a failure to load, entrants will be contacted and requested for a replacement. Where supplied data can only be loaded within a commercially available utility program, the utility used must be stipulated on the entry form at the appropriate point. Where non-available utilities have been used (such as self-devised programs), entries will not be accepted unless also accompanied by suitable loading programs and detailed instructions on their use.

6 Submitted work may not have been used before for any commercial processes, nor have appeared in printed form in any publication, nor be allowed to appear in printed form in any publication until after September 18 1988 without the prior consent of the Exhibition organisers.

7 Submitted work must, in the view of the judges, be original and not merely copies of existing media images, commensurate with artistic freedom to draw on ready-made images for inspiration.

8 All program data entered for consideration must run on one of the following computers: Spectrum 48K, Spectrum 128K (+2 and 3), Amstrad CPC 664/6128, Commodore 64/128, IBM PC, Atari ST, Amiga (any model). Works running on other machines will not be accepted.

9 The judges will consider submitted work within the context of each computer's capabilities and make every possible attempt to see that the final exhibition reflects the ranges of machines encompassed in point 8 above.

10 Entrants may submit up to a maximum of three works each. All cassettes and disks must be labelled clearly with the entrant's name, address and titles of works contained therein.

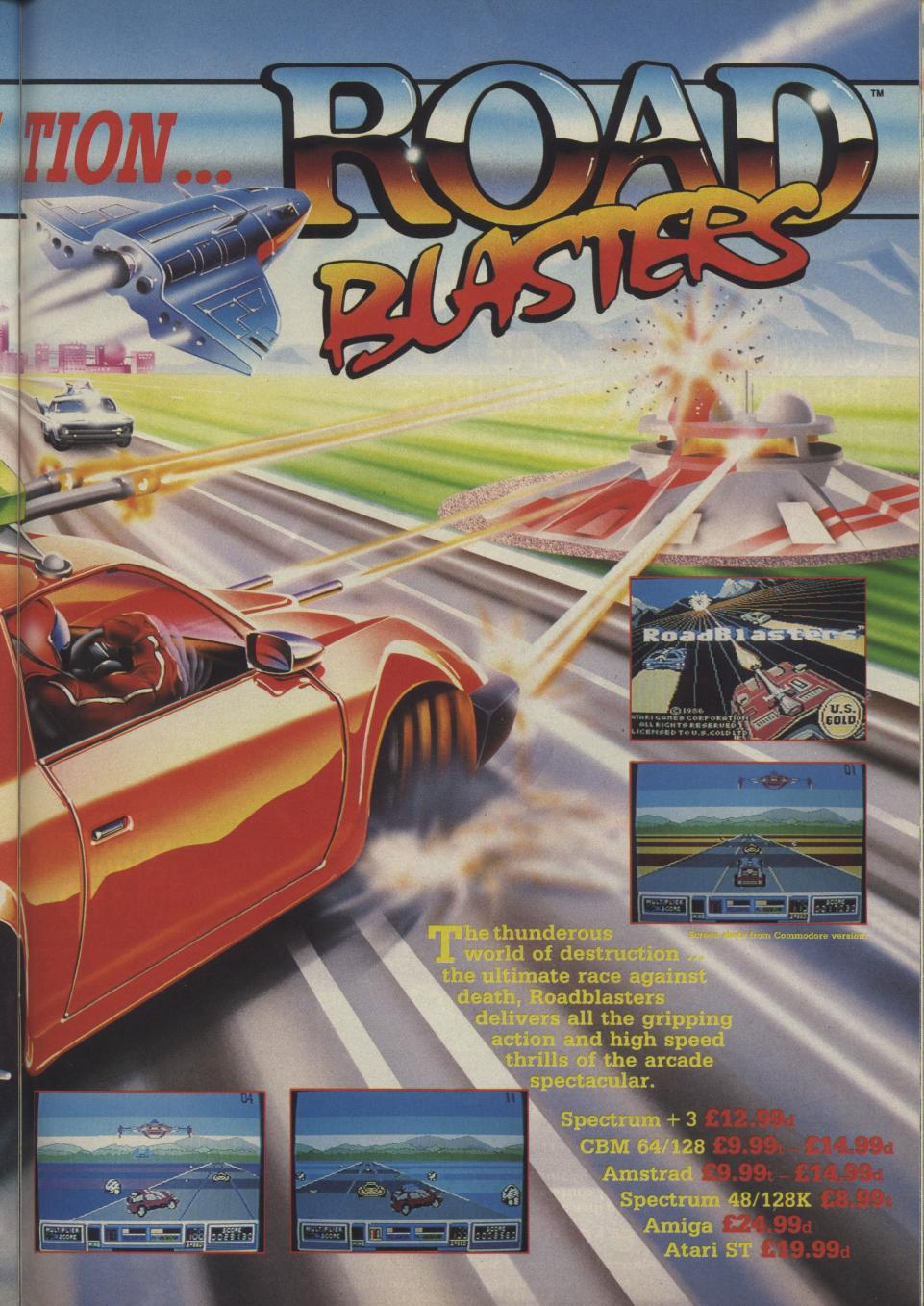
11 The final selection of works to be exhibited, and those chosen as prizewinners, will be at the sole discretion of the judges, and no correspondence may be entered into on this matter. Acceptances and rejections will be notified to all entrants by September 8 latest.

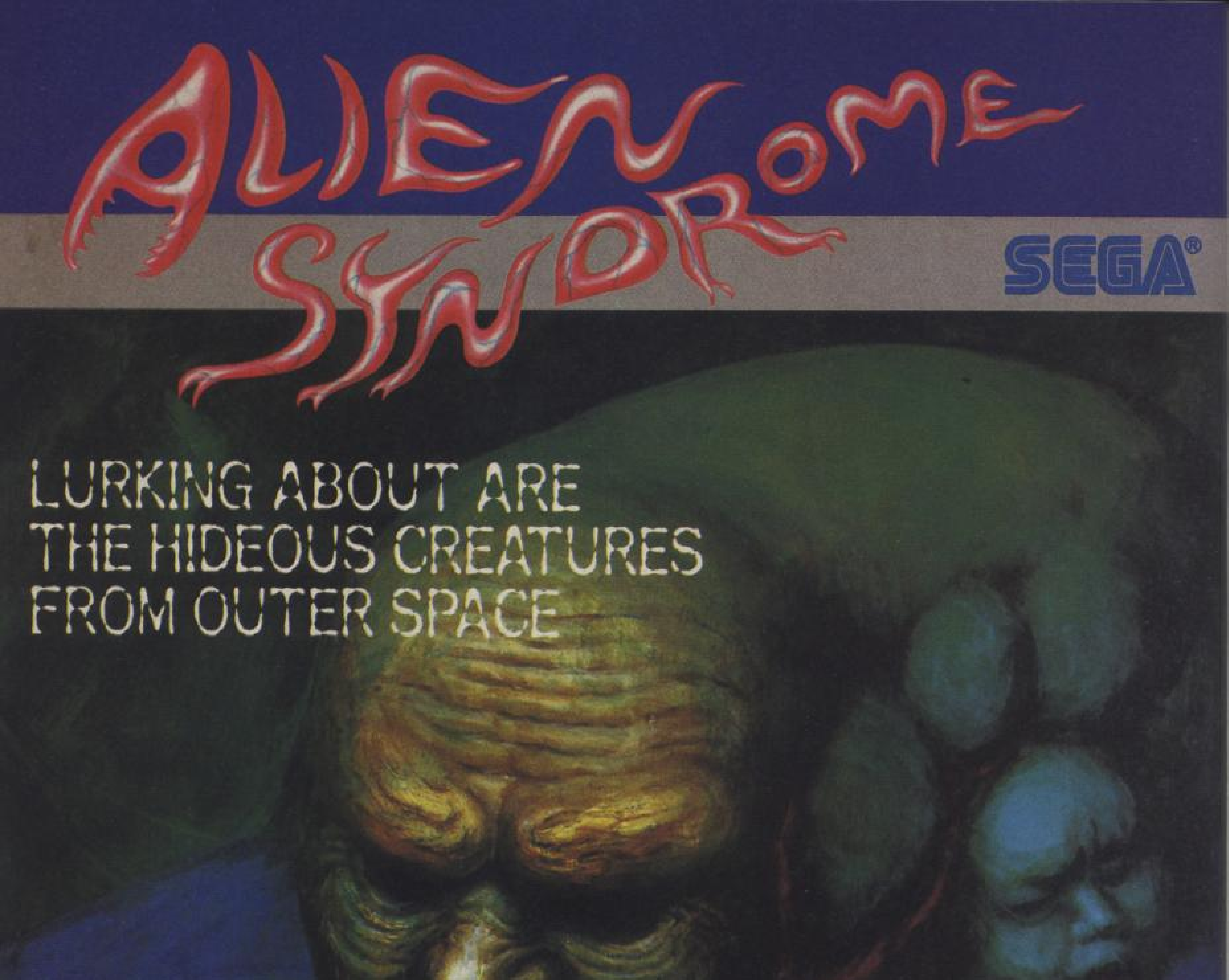
12 The organisers cannot be held responsible for the safe arrival of disks/cassettes. You are advised to despatch data by either registered post or recorded delivery and mark the packaging clearly as containing "MAGNETIC MEDIA". Disks/cassettes will only be returned if the entry form is accompanied by a suitably stamped addressed envelope. If you wish return to be by recorded delivery, then extra payment to cover the cost must be included.

13 Any submitted work carries an acceptance of first publishing rights free of charge in Newsfield Publications magazines. Exhibitors' work will be made available for sale to the public at the Personal Computer Show in suitably printed form on an order basis, either framed or unframed (prices at the discretion of the organisers). Receipts of sales less a 20% commission will be the property of the artist.

14 All exhibitors will be provided with free entry to the Personal Computer Show on the public days (September 16-18). Though not a condition, it is desirable that exhibitors should be available for any attendant public relations exposure of the exhibition either before, during or after the show.

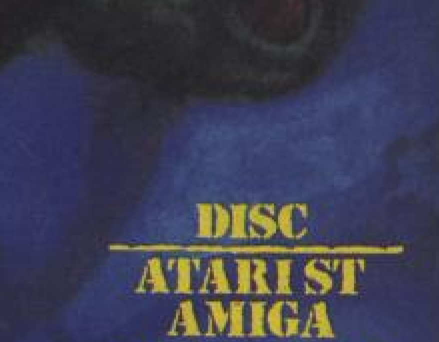

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ROAD BLASTERS™
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Screen shots from Commodore version
The thunderous world of destruction ... the ultimate race against death, Roadblasters delivers all the gripping action and high speed thrills of the arcade spectacular.
Spectrum + 3 £12.99d
CBM 64/128 £9.99t - £14.99d
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Spectrum 48/128K £8.99t
Amiga £24.99d
Atari ST £19.99d



ACE





screenshots from arcade machine

COIN-OP SENSATION OF THE YEAR!

Generally received as the graphically most awesome coin-op game of the past year, Sega's Alien Syndrome is also one of the most imaginative coin-ops ever! Voted ''Coin-op of the Month'' by Sinclair User (August 1987), they said, ''. . . brilliantly conceived . . . for excitement and playability I'd give it ten out of ten . . . awesome.''

Sega's most awesome coin-op ever!

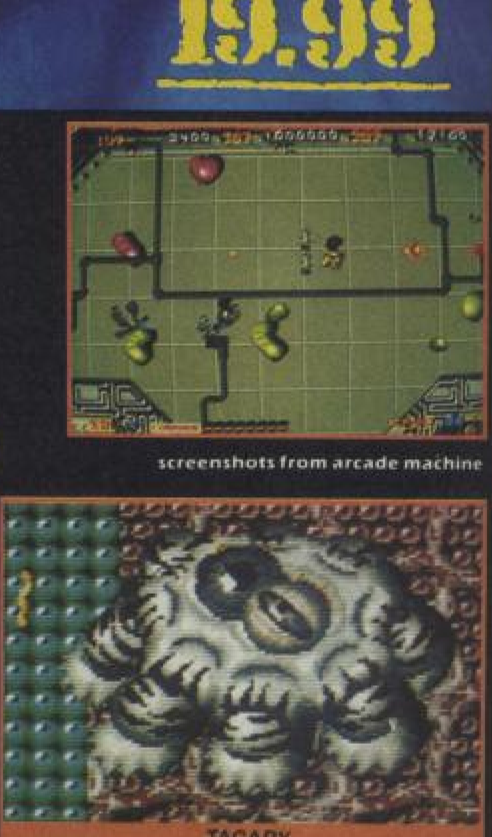
* Amstrad/Spectrum+3 disc £14.99 C64 disc £11.99

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HUGGER



TACAPY

GO SKATE CRAZY AND GET STREET CRED!





Gremlin's *Skate Crazy*, an outdoor sports simulation with a difference, is set for imminent release. Equipped only with a pair of roller skates you are set the difficult task of increasing your 'street cred' among followers and friends. Only the posiest, most daredevil stunts impress, leaping with calculated aplomb from 45° ramps, negotiating dazzlingly swift 360° turns, jumping barriers and skating backwards with ever-sharpening turns. As long as you're confident you're bound to succeed. Unfortunately confidence comes with practice and at first you're unlikely to have much of that. To save you from the embarrassment of landing gracelessly, red-faced and awkward on a hard, uncomfortable pavement, Gremlin are giving you the chance to enjoy the privilege of a little private practice. Two pairs of high-class, booted roller skates, are up for grabs – your 'street cred' will never be in doubt again.

All you have to do is spot the eight differences between the two pictures shown.
Circle the differences on the right-hand drawing, cut out the panel and send it, together with your name and address, to **GO CRAZY WITH GREMLIN COMP, CRASH,** ***PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB***

Two first prize winners will receive a pair of roller skates, a T-shirt and a *Skate Crazy* cap. Additional T-shirts and caps go to **30** runners-up, and a further **50** runners-up will receive a copy of the game.

Entries must be received by July 5 and, as usual, the decision of CRASH's appointed judges is final in all respects.

CRASH COMPETITION



Following the success of his latest masterpiece, Cybernoid**, Rafaelle Cecco has been kind enough to let us in on the trials and tribulations that occur during the programming of his next game. Over the coming months he'll be relating his day-to-day problems and triumphs as he battles against attributes, software sprites and Z80 machine code in a binary journey into the future . . .**

CECCO'S LOG

Stardate: 15 April 1988

Just when I thought it was safe to come out of hibernation after the completion of Cybernoid, the dreaded phone rings and I am greeted by Andrew Hewson's dulcet tones: 'Hello Raf, fancy doing this diary thing for CRASH?'. To which I reply, still wiping the sleep from my eyes, 'Well . . . er . . . um . . . I . . .'

'Great stuff Raf, I knew you wouldn't let me down - bye!'

Never being one to turn down such a challenge (especially when it's been rammed down my throat), I decide that it would be an interesting task after all.

I may as well start by getting the boring stuff out of the way, ie – me. I come from Tottenham in North London (or 'Norf' London as we say in that neck of the woods). I'm 20 years old and started programming on a ZX81 (surprise, surprise). Games that I have programmed in the past include **Equinox, Copout, Solomon's Key, Exolon**, *and most recently,* **Cybernoid**.

After leaving school with a handful of useless qualifications, I slaved over a hot terminal at the now defunct Mikro-Gen for a year but soon became tired of the 'in-house' atmosphere. I went freelance after leading a violent and bloody programmers' revolution. I still bear the mental scars and personality disorders to this day as I was only n-n-nineteen at the time.

As you can see from the photographs, a lot more equipment is used in developing Spectrum games than a single Spectrum and cassette-based assembler! The Spectrum is actually developed on an IBM compatible PC which runs a fast Z80 cross-assembler that can compile a 200K source file in a few seconds. After the program has been assembled, it can be downloaded to the Spectrum via a parallel link, ready for testing.

The graphics are all designed on an Atari ST using the **Advanced Art Studio**. *This package (programmed by my good friend Chris '8-bits are crap' Hinsley) also features a 'map editor' that enables all the screens in a game to be chopped and changed very quickly. The ST format graphics are converted to Spectrum format data ready to be incorporated into the main program.*

This type of set-up has many advantages over developing the program on the Spectrum itself. For a start you never have to worry about the Spectrum crashing as the program is permanently sorted on the PC's hard-disk. The program's development time is cut down by a huge amount. The same set-up can be used to program virtually any micro – the Amstrad CPC conversion was completed in less than two days after the Spectrum one.

The aim of this diary is to document all the successes, failures and mixed emotions that are part and parcel of developing new games. Just to whet your appetite, the project (as yet without a name) that you'll be witnessing is intended to develop into a full colour, scrolling, 'blast and think' (with the emphasis on blast!) type of game. There are some new and exciting ideas that Andrew Hewson and I have discussed for inclusion in the program; more about these in the months to come'.

▼ In a short moment of relaxation Raffaele blow dries his hair . . .



Stardate: 18 April 1988

I am graced by the ominous presence of Andrew Hewson and my bosom buddy/Commodore 64 programmer, Nick Jones (who will be doing the C64 conversion). We discuss (argue about) the game and I am given a sample contract to study (yes, I actually get paid for doing this sort of thing).

After many cups of tea and a few bouts of arm twisting and Chinese burns, we decide that a fantasy/fairytale setting would make an interesting departure from the usual science fiction ambience that my past games have tended to carry. This would also allow great scope for some snazzy graphics – and let my imagination run riot.

Stardate: 19 April 1988

I ponder over the significance of yesterday's meeting and decide that a long spell in bed will help me get over it.

Stardate: 20 April 1988

Knowing that the game is to be scrolling, I have a fiddle on the PC, trying to weigh up the problems of horizontal scrolling on a Spectrum. Hmmm, this is going to be a little harder than I thought; for a start the attributes will have to be deviously arranged to avoid colour-clash problems. I think that monochrome games are undesirable on a computer which can support eight colours.

Stardate: 21 April 1988

I spent most of today trying to decode the contract which has obviously been written in solicitor-speak (double-dutch). It's amazing just how horrendously professional this business has become; a single game involves not only programmers and programming but advertising,

distributors, release schedules, public relations, artists, musicians and all manner of weird and wonderful people.

Stardate: 22 April 1988

I discuss the finer points of the contract with Andrew on the 'phone.

Stardate: 23 April 1988

Andrew Hewson turns up yet again, waving the contract in my face (on a Saturday morning for God's sake!). I pretend that I've changed my mind about the whole thing but Andrew manages to see through my pathetic façade and we both sign on the dotted line. With tongue firmly in cheek, my girlfriend takes photographs of this historic Cecco/Hewson contract.

Stardate: 25 April 1988

I decide to spring-clean my office ready for some hard core programming next week. Phew! Two massive sackfuls of rubbish, program listings and old magazines are thrown out. The amount of mess I create during the development of a program can be quite alarming at times.

Stardate: 26 April 1988

I study **Zynaps** *closely as this is the game that I consider to have the most outstanding scrolling on the Spectrum. Sometimes it's difficult to believe that the Spectrum has no hardware assistance. It's always worth checking out other games to generate a bit of competitive zeal.*



▲ The setup as Raf sees it (L to R): Atari 1040 ST, Philips CP/M System, Citizen 120D printer and Olivetti PC

Stardate: 27 April 1988

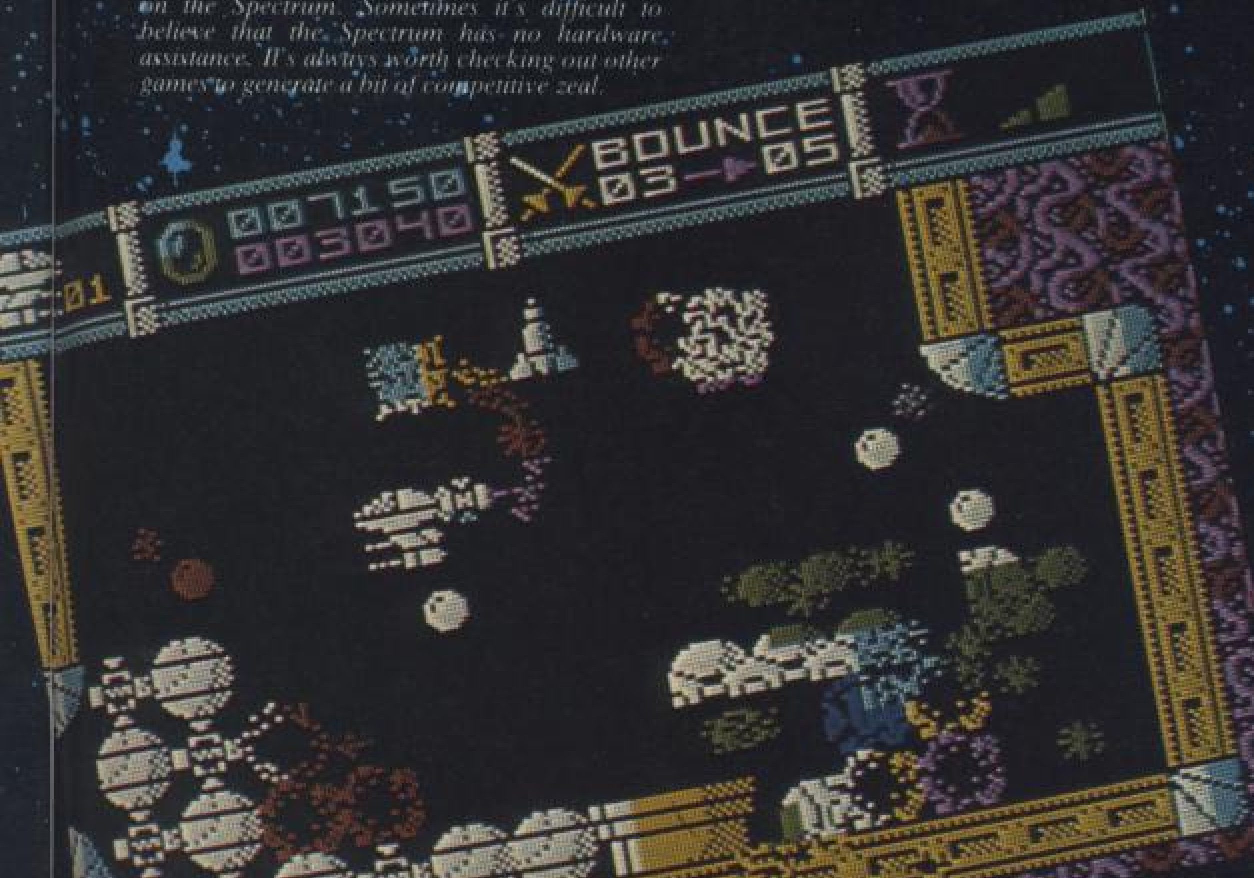
I've begun rewriting my graphics converter utilities to work on the Spectrum itself, rather than on my weather-beaten Philips CPM system. I used this old fogey to develop all my games right up to **Exolon**. *It has now been superceded by the faster IBM compatible PC. I'll probably use the Philips as a giant door-stop or something. Any offers for the old beast will be greatly appreciated.*

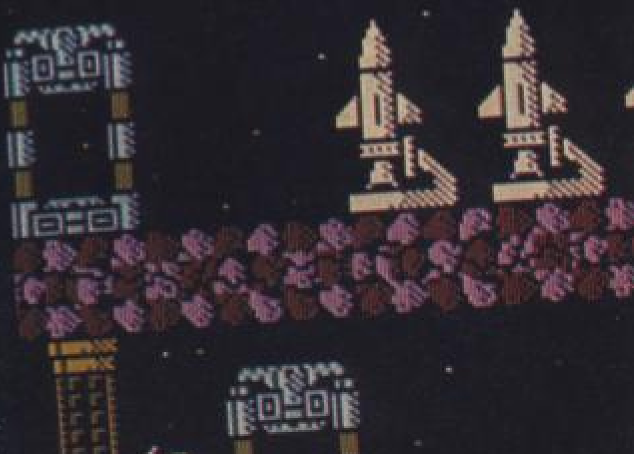
Stardate: 28 April 1988

I am being pestered to get his diary completed - give 'em an inch and they'll take a mile. Nick Jones suggests a terrific way of improving the scrolling routine. It imposes a few limitations on how I can arrange the graphics, but it's well worth the sacrifice for the extra speed.

Stardate: 29 April 1988

Well, that's it for this month. Next issue I'll be concentrating more on the program itself and, all being well, will have an up-and-running demo to show off.







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SCORES

SCORES is THE monthly game-by-game list showing a whole range of scores on the very LATEST games (no more *Jet Set Willy* records!).

Each month there's the top score received so far, plus a couple of others so you can measure yourself against mere mortals as well as the billion-point bunch.

From all the entries – irrespective of whether they're printed or not – there are five winners picked at random. The first prize winner receives **£40** of software plus a CRASH cap and T-shirt, while four runners-up receive CRASH caps and T-shirts. So don't forget to tell us on the form what software and T-shirt you'd like – should lady luck smile upon you!

ARKANOID – REVENGE OF DOH	Imagine
Andrew Wilson, Gildea Park	811770
James Dawson, Chatteris	630130
Jeremy Hyde, Portadown	379890

ATF	Digital Integration
Kathryn Waldock, Bishop Auckland	15450
Clive Nevill, Exeter	10842
Ronnie Rylatt, Porchester	7835

BASKET MASTER	Imagine
Steven Cooper, Cleveland	83-0
Alex Darlon, Plymouth	83-24
Gregor King, Kirkaldy	48-36

BUBBLE BOBBLE	Firebird
Damian Collier, Leeds	10253530
André Vivian, Oxford	763400
James Elliot, Glossop	238770

COBRA	Ocean
Andrew Platt, Stockport	592800
Matthew Clarke, Barnsley	127000
Gareth Wills, Bristol	100050

COMBAT SCHOOL	Ocean
Paul Creasey, Fareham	281300
Daniel Worf, Belvedere	95060
Mark Roberts, Yeovil	36400

CYBERNOID	Hewson
Keith Pullin, Fareham	95027
Brian Stringer, High Wycombe	65238
Peter Hewitson, Sutton Coldfield	28901

DRILLER	Incentive
Michael Turner, Stoke Gabriel	2118020
Edward Anyaeji, London SE1	2113121
Spencer King, Wincanton	1732490

ENDURO RACER	Activision
M Needs, Telford	6602523
Kevin Sambridge, Broxbourne	1746012
Dominic Carter, Cleethorpes	711754

EXOLON	Hewson
Kathryn Waldock, Bishop Auckland	2374150
Kevin Odgers, Hartlepool	80150
Robert Miller, Portadown	75250

FIREFLY	Ocean/Special FX
John Wheate, Birmingham	521350
Wayne Morledge, Ilkeston	482710
Stuart Bagley, Barrow-in-Furness	303021

FLYING SHARK	Firebird
James Sammon, Bradford	627260
Richard 'Nard' Elmes, Tankerton	601230
Lindsay Abery, Bradfield	132490

GRYZOR	Imagine
Gerald McCay, Belfast	240100
Daniel Hulbert, Newport, Gwent	69410
Colin Hill, Middlesborough	36800

IK+	System 3
J M Fisher, Gedling	254120
Brian Allan, Glasgow	213683
J Counsell, Blackburn	175600

IKARI WARRIORS	Elite
Stephen Sanderson, Reading	3306700
David Guest, Swanley	86500
Andrew Henrys, South Wirral	67500

NORTH STAR	Gremlin Graphics
Chris Joseph, Bury St Edmunds	797260
Andrew Smith, Colwyn Bay	325050
Kleth Nettleship, Lowestoft	62100

OUT RUN	US Gold
Timothy Goodchild, Ipswich	94120600
Anthony Underwood, Bolton	20056705
Stephen Murphy, Sutton Coldfield	1420010

PLATOON	Ocean
Alex Higham, Southsea	129800
Robert Irvine, Belfast	96300
Jamie Willmott, Liverpool	57000

RAMPAGE	Activision
Jeremy Scott, Inverurie	159654
Andrew Tate, Aylesbury	95520
Howard T Brugge, Paignton	32870

RENEGADE	Imagine
Stuart Ridge, Marazion	15273921
Tony Murphy, Killarney	1418550
David Carter, Stoke-on-Trent	147250

STAR WARS	Domark
Paul Hadfield, Bolton	100570050
Andrew Young, Fareham	3151652
Christian Priestman, Hull	372769

SUPER HANG-ON	Electric Dreams
Richard Feltbower, Stoke-on-Trent	60908324
Andrew Fox, Thetford	15090850
Raymond Punchard, Oldham	715700

THUNDERCATS	Elite
Matthew McEvaddy, Claregalway	350000
Gavyn Lewis, Stourbridge	254650
Neil Screaton, Atherstone	128850

ZYNAPS	Hewson
Alan Lothian, Wallasey	232470
Wayne Parsons, Fareham	197200
Alex Ng, Colwyn Bay	42125

WINNERS

The first prize winner of this month's **SCORES** is **Matthew Garrahan** of Washington in Tyne and Wear. His choice of software contains such delights as *Super Hang-On* and *Nebulus* – I'm sure they'll supply him with hours of fun. Like the following four runners-up, he also receives the obligatory CRASH cap and CRASH T-shirt. The fearsome four are **Andy King** of Chatham; **Stephen Ridge** from Marazion in Cornwall; **Alex McGregor** who lives in Bishopmill and **Jamie Willmott** of Huyton in Liverpool.

PUBLIC SERVICE ANNOUNCEMENT: You may have noticed that the highest scorer on *Driller* has changed. This is due to the previous score being totally illegal. As I was so rightly informed by Incentive's Ian Andrew, it is impossible to get more than 3500000 on *Driller* – even when you get everything . . . So, SIMON TOWERZEY, (confirmed member of fibbers anonymous) watch out! ANNOUNCEMENT ENDS

Don't forget – any score sent in to **SCORES** can win you a prize, even if it's not printed – but avoid public humiliation: don't cheat! (I'm not so sure about that huge *Bubble Bobble* score either . . .)

SEND ME YOUR SCORES

Send this form (or a copy) with your scores for up to three games to **ROBIN CANDY'S SCORES, CRASH, *PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB*.** ONLY GENUINE SCORES WILL BE ACCEPTED; any improbably huge scores will be immediately binned and the sender will be forced to share a desk with Richard Eddy – a fate worse than listening to him on the phone.

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BEYOND THE ICE PALACE

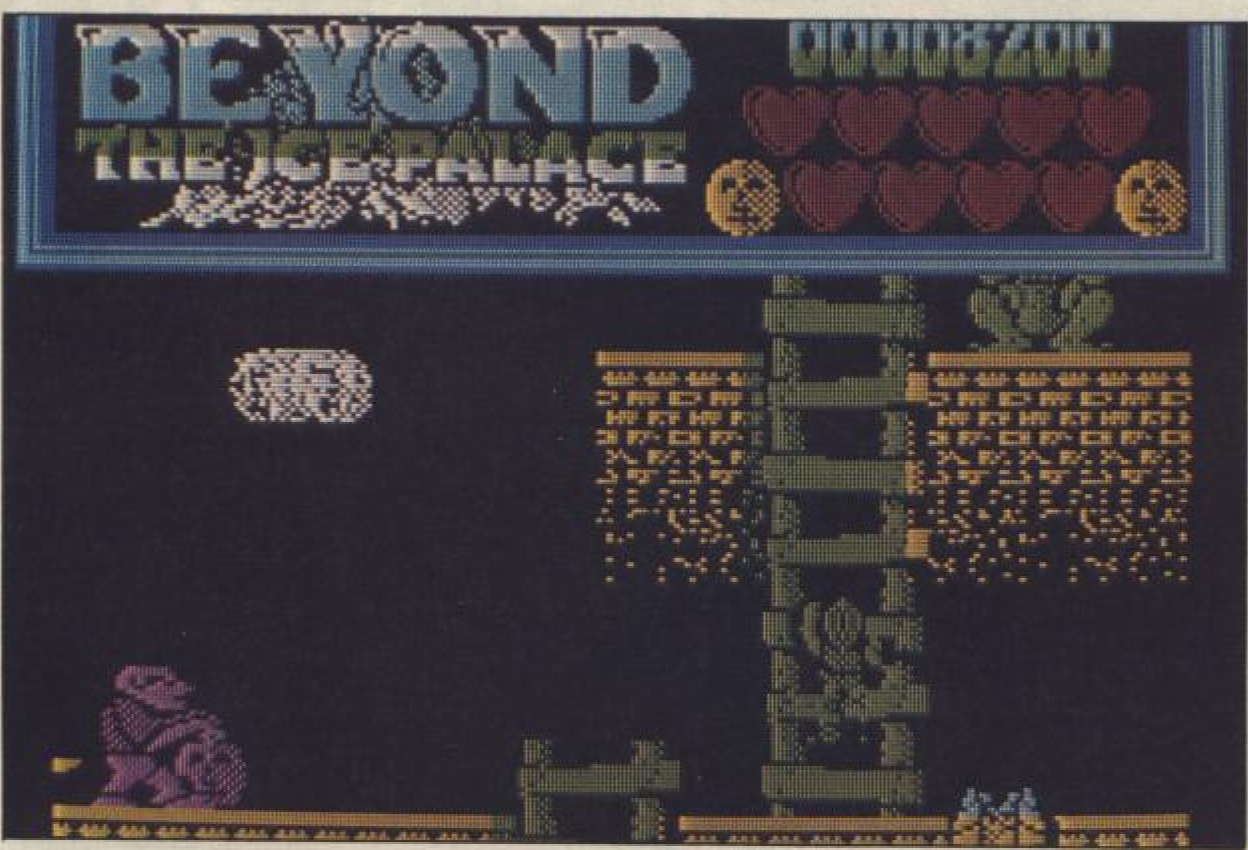
Producer: **Elite**
Retail price: **£7.99 cassette, £11.99 disk**
Software
Authors: **Paradise**

Beyond the Ice Palace there lies a mystical land caught up in a bitter battle between good and evil. Dark spirits are setting alight the forests, destroying the homes and livelihood of simple woodcutters. In desperation the ancient and wise spirits of the woods shoot a sacred arrow into the air. Whoever finds it is bound to destroy the powers of darkness or die in the attempt . . .

Running and jumping along a horizontally scrolling landscape of rocky caverns, moving platforms and precarious ladders, the chosen warrior attempts to penetrate the darker regions of his troubled land. Occasionally organic boulders block his path while walls raise themselves mysteriously behind him. Grotesquely shaped creatures emerge from the shadows: ghoulish monsters, gigantic caterpillars, zombies and butterflies bearing a deadly sting. Burly ogres hurl axes and fluttering insects belch out firebolts. Contact with any of these results in the immediate loss of one of nine lives.

Weapons, varying in strength and ranging from knife to firebolt, can be collected on the way. They have individual effects on different aliens, some of which need to be shot several times. A ducking action gives the player extra mobility when dealing with

► **You meet the strangest people . . .**



NICK

" Beyond The Ice Palace is yet another great game from Elite. It has the basic makings of a shoot-'em-up but the arcade adventure aspects make it much more interesting than your average blaster. All the characters in the game are excellently drawn and animated, and colour is also used well. There are some decent sound effects and a tune at the beginning (even on the 48K version!). Some of the baddies can get really frustrating, especially when they just refuse to die on the sixth shot! All you can do is keep firing and dodging them until they give up. The option to call a spirit comes in useful and saves on the old finger work in sticky situations. Beyond The Ice Palace has plenty of content so you won't get fed up easily. Well worth the money. "

81%



► **Your soul returns to heaven**

► **Better put your woolly jumpers on for this one**



PAUL

" It just goes to prove that you don't need to lash out thousands of pounds getting a cool 'n' trendy arcade licence to produce a cool 'n' trendy arcade-like game. Beyond The Ice Palace is undoubtedly the best game to come from Elite for quite a while – much more fun than the likes of Buggy Boy and Ikari Warriors. The game could easily have been called Ghosts 'n' Goblins II as it's just like the arcade game, but on a larger scale. The baddies contain a whole range of rough 'n' tough characters – each requiring a different killing technique – making it very addictive. But where Beyond The Ice Palace scores over other games of this large genre is in its clever use of colour. There's just enough to create varied scenery but not an overuse creating scrolling problems. I suggest you carefully consider purchasing it – an old genre, well done. "

85%

particularly persistent enemies.

Two Spirits of the Forest accompany the warrior on his journey. When activated via the keyboard they sacrifice themselves in order to reduce the power of the enemies currently on screen; some are weakened while others are completely destroyed. Extra spirits and bonus icons, which boost points, are scattered around the hostile land.

A status display shows number of lives remaining, current score and number of spirits left. Should the hero succeed, the land to the north is saved; should he fail, there will be nothing but death, fire and destruction in the mystical kingdom beyond the legendary palace of ice.

KATI

" Considering it's so far north, the land beyond the Ice Palace is surprisingly colourful. Vibrant reds contrast boldly with the green skin colouring of most aliens creating a spooky, supernatural atmosphere to which even the inevitable moments of colour clash contribute. The main sprite is precisely drawn and well animated; even his flowing hair bobs up and down as he runs. In terms of gameplay the legendary land of 'goblins and ghosts' is rather like a sophisticated version of Ghosts 'n' Goblins**. The number of weapons, the complexity of the landscape (which can usually be negotiated in several ways) and the variety of different enemies have been carefully designed to keep you on the edge of your seat. The sound, which is confined to one or two squirty effects, could have been improved and collision detection can be slightly inaccurate. Apart from that** Beyond The Ice Palace **makes for a slick, playable and extremely compelling fantasy arcade adventure. "**

82%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: a clever mix of detailed characters and colour backgrounds
Sound: jolly title tune with many varied and inventive effects
Options: definable keys
General rating: *Ghosts 'n' Goblins* on a larger scale. Challenging and addictive, at a reasonable price

Presentation	80%
Graphics	87%
Playability	80%
Addictive qualities	83%
OVERALL	**83%**

FEEL THE POWER *BEHIND A COMPUTER DESK FROM*



After a massive relaunch at the beginning of the year, that long established budget software company The Power House are now set to release their best games yet! The next fab four to come from The Power House contain such delights as a shoot 'em up, an arcade adventure, a racing simulator and a free-falling character called Norman.

In *Powerama* you take the controls of a humble scout ship which must take on the might of a colossal alien attack fleet who's next stop is Earth.

Moonboots is the latest star character to come from The Power House. Moonboots is no ordinary space traveller, when he gets stranded on *Metropolis* he sets out on an adveture filled with puzzling and dangerous obstacles. Using his ability to change into three other forms (Superspy, Zoid the Droid and Mad Monk) Moonboots must find the priceless fuel for his stranded ship and return home.

TT Racing Simulator is the latest game from The Power House to capture the thrills and spills of track racing. Up to six players can pit their wits against each other and make the crucial decisions on when to refuel and replace tyres and brakes. And then there's *Norman* – a sky diving hero! Help the eponyomous character avoid the guardians of the energy cubes as he floats to the ground.

But don't rush out to the shops and buy them just yet, for you can win all of these games in this great competition from The Power House. If you fancy your chances at winning all of these games then take a look at the questions below. Send us the answers and they'll be placed in a giant golden dish (well a dustbin lid actually!). The **first** entry out of the dish wins a fabulous self-assembly **Computer Desk**, to keep all your equipment neat and tidy, plus a copy of the four power-packed games. **25 runners-up** each get *Powerama, Metropolis, TT Racing Simulator* and *Norman*.

1 *Name ten games from The Power House released in 1988?*
2 *In what city are the The Power House offices?*
3 *From what tomb did The Power House's arcade adventure of late 1987 come?*
4 *Which game from The Power House was accompanied with promotional sick bags?*
5 *What recent game from The Power House featured Mega Garbage Beings?*

Just write your answers on the back of a postcard (or sealed envelope) and pop them off to **I WANT A COMPUTER DESK COMP, CRASH,** ***PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB***. All entries must be received by 5 July and don't forget the decision of the prestigous CRASH judges is final in a respects.

FRONTLINE

Producer: **Zeppelin Games**
Retail price: **£2.99**
Authors: **Spike & Michael Owens**

A top class mercenary has penetrated maximum security headquarters in an attempt to get his hands on the secret missile plans housed in the laboratory. Taking the part of this highly trained, heavily equipped, super-fit fighter, the player battles through several multi-directionally scrolling levels in an attempt to locate the coveted blueprints.

The enemy camp is brimming with soldiers, armoured tanks, motorbikes and jeeps. Pillboxes and trenches belch out a constant stream of bullets and enemy grenades hurtle through the air. The mercenary's initial arsenal of grenades, mines and bullets can be improved by collecting the additional supplies scattered around each part of the camp.

Although major injury is immediately fatal, the player can withstand a limited number of bullets. His decreasing energy rate is indicated on a status display which also shows current score, number of lives left and amount of ammunition remaining.

Each level hides an access pass. Once found, this gives admission to the laboratory which in turn provides information for entry to the next round and another step towards the much-needed plans.

► **Derek Brewster's revenge**



KATI

" Frontline **is extremely well presented with a colourful title screen, scrolling hint messages and a sophisticated status display. Unfortunately the central graphics don't quite match up to the promise of the front end: the sprites are blocky and despite a few splashes of colour, most of the combat zone has been dipped in an unpleasant shade of yellow. Although gameplay is very reminiscent of** Ikari Warriors, **the search and find element** ***just*** **saves it from total obscurity. Charging through the undergrowth at breakneck speed is initially quite addictive but the lastability of the appeal is doubtful. "**

54%

PAUL

" I can't say that this is the sort of game that I'd have chosen for releasing as my first game on the Spectrum, but Zeppelin have done it – and I dare say they'll sell a fair few despite its poor quality. Everything about Frontline **is just not up to the mark. The graphics are acceptable, but could have been improved – the sound likewise. In fact the only impressive part of** Frontline **is the presentation, which is colourful and informative. There are many better shoot 'em ups at a budget price (**U.C.M. **for example),** Frontline **is just more run-of-the-mill stuff. "**

45%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: small characters on a simple and colourless background
Sound: simple spot effects
General rating: a simple start for Zeppelin Games

Presentation	70%
Graphics	40%
Playability	50%
Addictive qualities	48%
OVERALL	**50%**

SABOTAGE

Producer: **Zeppelin Games**
Retail price: **£2.99**
Author: **Nicky Rutter**

The eight sectors of your planet are under alien attack. As a trained mercenary you do not hesitate in volunteering to clear each sector of enemy craft and hunt out the vital pieces of a blueprint which, when assembled, allow your ship's weapon computer to lock on to the alien leader's mothercraft.

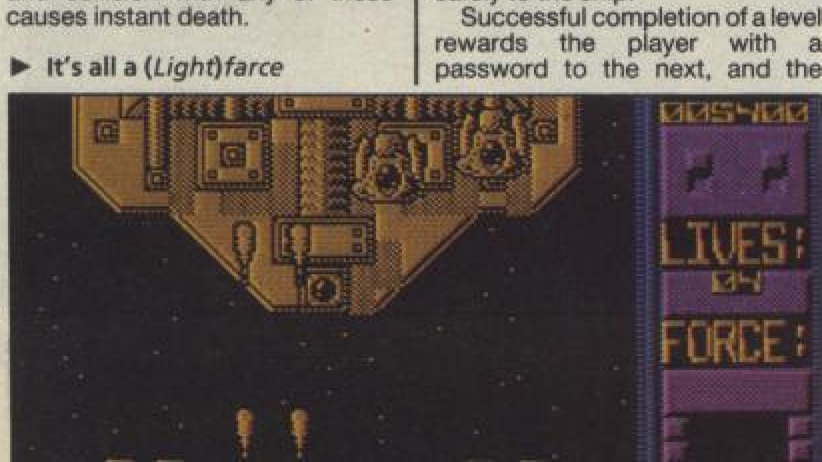
The player hurtles through space over a vertically scrolling background of futuristic structures, bridges and platforms. Hostile enemy craft appear in various formations from above, and collision with any of these causes instant death.

Collectable lettered icons temporarily improve the defensive equipment of the player's craft. Forcefields provide a few moments of invulnerability, and pockets of gravitational acceleration increase speed.

Following a climactic confrontation with the sector's mothership, the player's vessel automatically lands in the alien camp. The player is transported into a maze of passages viewed from above. Carefully avoiding the flight of deadly birds, the complex is negotiated in order to collect a section of blueprint and return safely to the ship.

Successful completion of a level rewards the player with a password to the next, and the appropriate password allows access to any level at the beginning of the game. Once all the blueprints have been collected the alien leader's fate is sealed.

► **It's all a (*Light*)*farce***



KATI

" Sabotage **is an attractive and competent rendering of the ageing shoot 'em up theme with a couple of small variations: the password system (an effective antidote against the boring repetition of levels you already know back to front) and the maze element which comes as a welcome break from bombing and blasting. Although sound is virtually non-existent, the monochrome backdrops are suitably atmospheric, difficulty is nicely graded and the scrolling is smooth. All the elements of a compelling (if unspectacular) game are present; whether you take up Zeppelin's challenge ultimately depends on just how addicted to quick-fire blasting you are. "**

60%

PAUL

" Why can't people come out with something even slightly original in the budget market nowadays? The first stage of Sabotage **is very reminiscent of FTL's** Lightforce, **except in monochrome, negating the whole point of** Lightforce, **which was its clever use of colour. The bonus stage is hardly worth mentioning: it contains crude characters and presents very little challenge to the average player (ie Nick Roberts!). If you're after a simple and cheap** Lightforce **clone then** Sabotage **may appeal to you; I detested it though. "**

35%

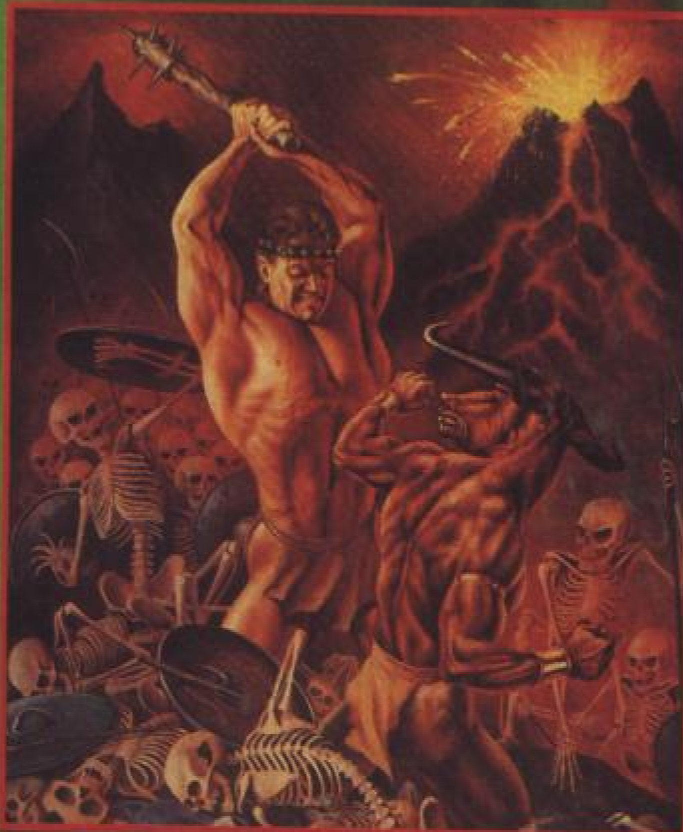
COMMENTS

Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: oversized monochrome graphics on first stage – tiny and colourful on second!
Sound: mediocre sound effects
General rating: a low starting point for a new company

Presentation	50%
Graphics	50%
Playability	53%
Addictive qualities	55%
OVERALL	**53%**

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Son of the Gods, curse of his fellow men, Hercules is set 12 awesome tasks to exonerate the sin of murdering his children. Armed by his divine fathers he sets forth to face the hideous skeleton hordes and ultimately overcome the evil minotaur. To slay the damned is his only saviour in repenting his sins.

BLOOD BROTHERS

"Our blood is mixed,
We are as one,
Let no man or beast come between us,
And let nothing deter us from our aim,
To avenge the deaths of our parents,
And destroy the Scorpians,
DEATH TO THE SCORPIANS"





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BUGGY BOY

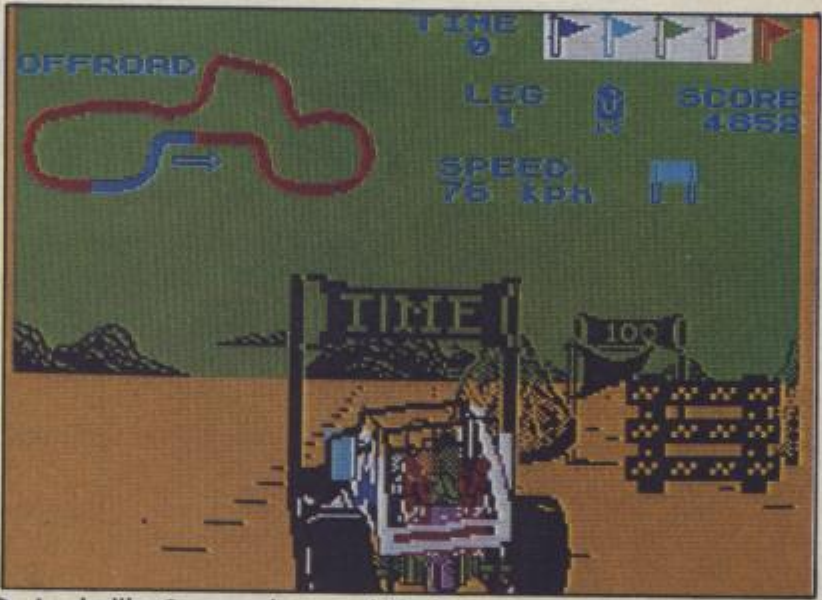
Producer: **Elite**
Retail price: **£7.99 cassette, £11.99 disk**
Author: **Maz Spork from a Taito coin-op**

Buggy Boy, a great success on the Commodore 64, has finally made it to the Spectrum. Leap into your race-tuned, customised Baja Bug and get ready to hurtle over five of the toughest, roughest, meanest and hardest race tracks ever devised. Select your course from the title screen, fasten your seat belt and get ready to race against the clock!

Each track is divided into four individual stages. The difficult cross-country terrain is punctured by black tunnels, narrow bridges and a forbidding array of obstacles. Successful drivers dodge, dart and swerve through complex formations of boulders, brick walls, lamp posts and trees. Particularly tough barriers are avoided by hitting one of the many logs that lie across the track: your buggy flies through the air, soars over the offending boulder or wall and lands with the greatest of ease on the other side. Driving over tree stumps and small rocks tilts the car on to two wheels, making it especially manoeuvrable when it comes to negotiating small gaps.

Falling off bridges, crashing into the edge of tunnels, or colliding with trees, boulders and walls cause the buggy to explode. A new vehicle promptly takes its place but the resulting delay may seriously impair your chances of completing a track. Driving through time gates increases the amount of time allotted to the next stage of the course by two seconds per gate.

Bonus points are scored by weaving through the score gates and collecting flags which gain extra points for every sequence of five. Status displays show current speed, score, leg, number of flags in the sequence collected and a miniature map showing your position on the overall track. Complete each course with record points and your achievement is displayed as the ultimate highscore.



► Looks like Cameron's passed his driving test!

KATI

" To expect Buggy Boy **to match up to the high standards of the coin-op is completely unrealistic. Some resemblance in terms of playability and control isn't too much to ask for, though, and Elite certainly provide you with that. It's just that 'some' doesn't turn out to be quite enough. The graphics are just about as good as they can be on the Spectrum and the programmers have managed to include a lot of the original features. Unfortunately, the buggy is slightly too slow and just too large. Unless you're going uphill you can't always see where you're going; successful manoeuvring is more a matter of luck than skill. When the vehicle tips to one side you might as well be playing with a blindfold over your head. Mind you, judging from the success of** Out Run **this isn't going to put anyone off. A lot of people are going to have a wild and wicked time speeding around the tracks – with a bit more effort they could have had a super-sensational ride. "**

71%

NICK

" Buggy Boy, **that fantastic three-screen arcade game has at last arrived on the Spectrum, with all the graphics, colour and sound of the coin-op machine . . . Well not quite! The graphics look good from afar, but up close they're just a mess of chunky blocks! Some levels are fun to play, especially the sections where you go over bridges and through tunnels. The courses don't seem to be all that different on the Spectrum, though: no footballs or slopes (as there are on all other versions), just a differently coloured background. I must say that I was disappointed with** Buggy Boy, **it just can't be happy on the 8-bit Spectrum. "**

71%

PAUL

" Elite's latest arcade tie-in suffers from all the problems of the infamous Out Run **– and, like the US Gold top-seller, you'll either love it or hate it. For those that want something that looks like the arcade machine there'll be plenty to be happy about. Visually the game is very similar to** Super Hang-On, **using lots of blocky colour on the main buggy – which is very large, often hiding most of the scenery – but leaving the rest of the objects colourless. However, due to the vast array of gates, trees, rocks and stones on the track, the game suffers terribly from locking up when too much appears on the screen – thus making it quite unplayable. If only the programmers had concentrated on making the game playable and addictive while ignoring the impressive visual aspects they'd have had an** Out Run **challenger on their hands. Sadly it suffers from all the same flaws as US Gold's product. "**

72%

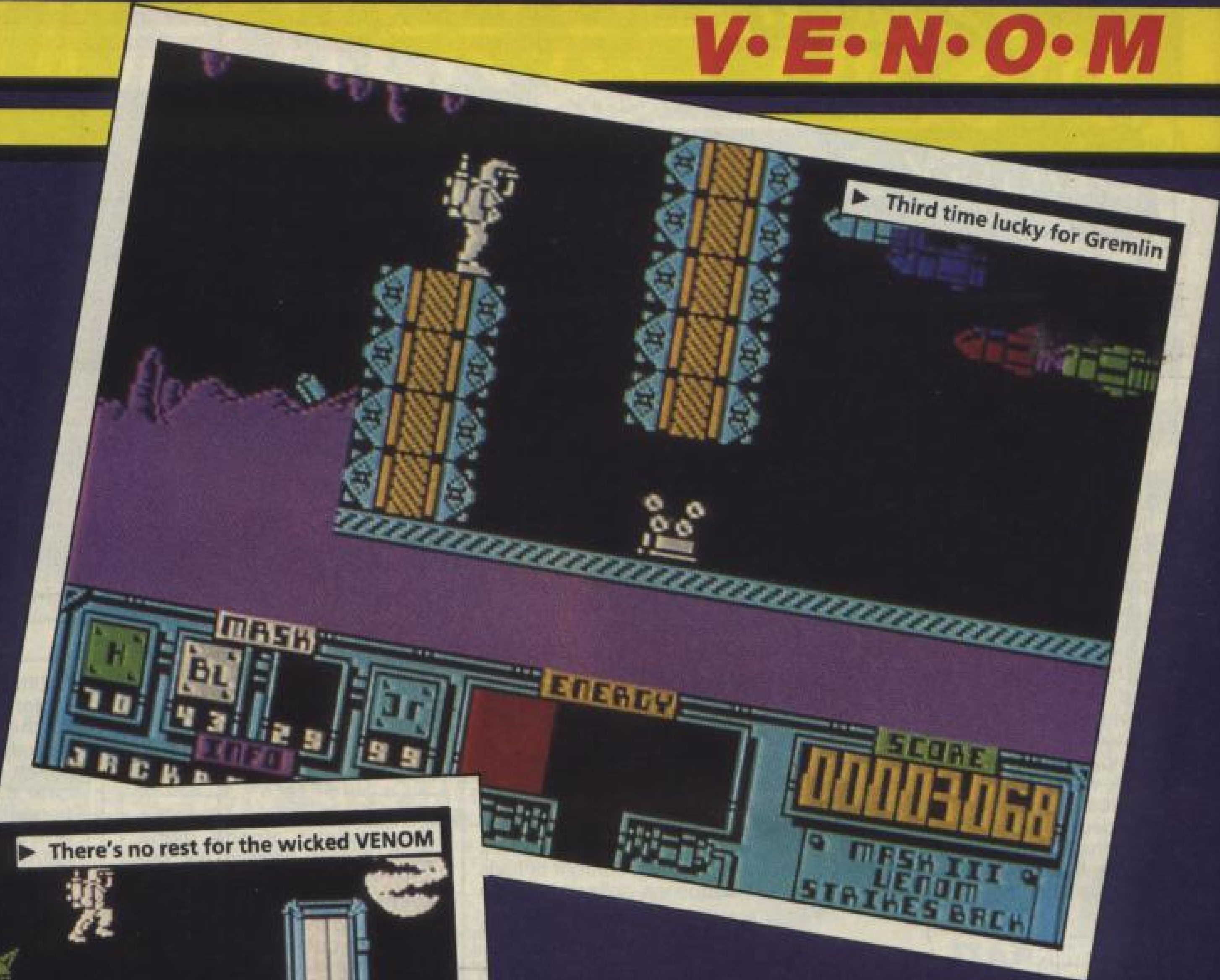


COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: the cluttered, but colourful, display creates strong visual problems when jumping over rocks and hills
Sound: above average 128K ditties, with restricted – but similar – tunes on the 48K
Options: choice of five tracks
General rating: visually a good conversion, but lacking playability and addictiveness to make it a real winner

Presentation	62%
Graphics	66%
Playability	72%
Addictive qualities	68%
OVERALL	**71%**

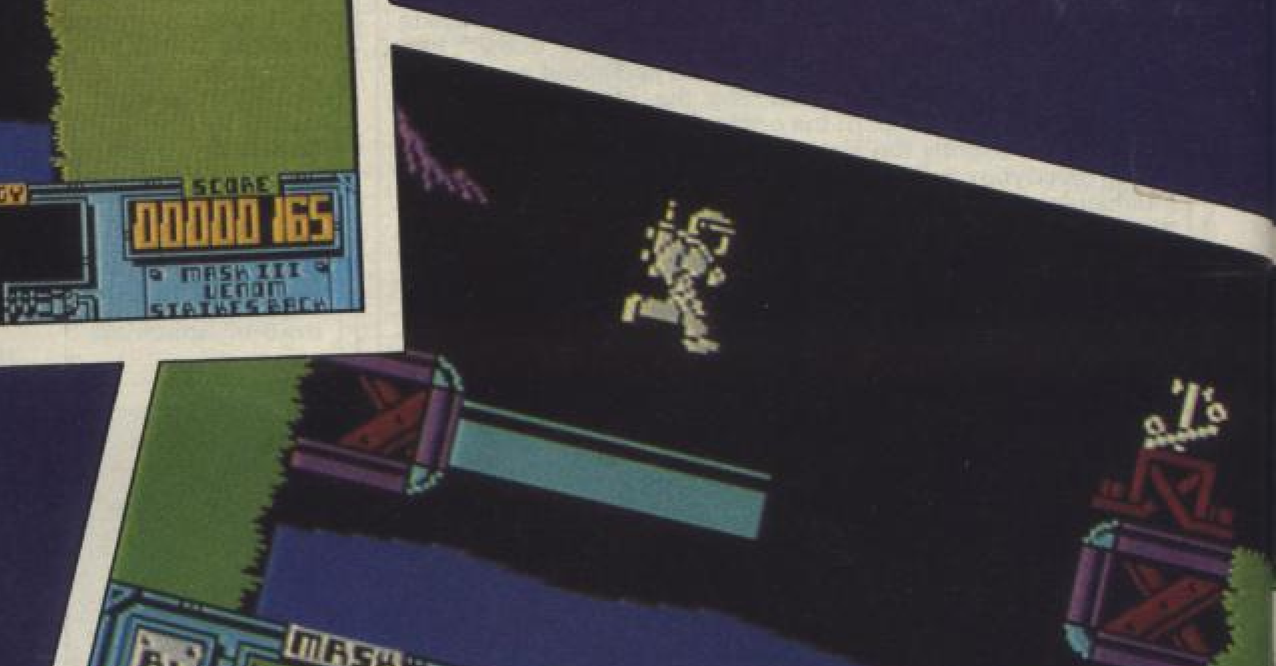
V·E·N·O·M S



▶ Third time lucky for Gremlin



▶ There's no rest for the wicked VENOM



▶ Merciless Matt Tracker sets off on another intrepid expedition

Producer: **Gremlin Graphics**
Retail price: **£8.99 cassette, £12.99 disk**
Author: **programmed by Mark Rogers and Colin Dooley, graphics by Steve and Marcos**

S·T·R·I·K·E·S B·A·C·K

Matt Tracker's third appearance on the Gremlin label is fraught with personal anxiety. Miles Mayhem has kidnapped his son Scott and is holding him to ransom on the moon. Unless MASK's entire forces are surrendered to VENOM, Scott is doomed. Matt's dilemma is a public as well as a private one: if he gives in, VENOM gains total control over the Peaceful Nations Alliance but if he holds out, his son may not survive. The only possible course of action is to orchestrate a clandestine rescue attempt; equipped only with his spacesuit, Matt resolves to undertake the dangerous mission on his own.

Teleporting onto the moon's surface he begins the perilous journey which is set against a horizontally scrolling lunar landscape of hills, depressions and vast stretches of deadly sea. Purple mountain ranges pucker the horizon while doors occasionally allow entry into inhabited (but mostly deserted) parts of the moon base.

VENOM's defence systems are on full alert: blockbusters, deathspheres, serpents and angels of death belch out ammunition while surplus projectiles hurtle through the air. Too much contact with enemy fire and Matt's energy level is radically decreased. Should his energy counter fall to zero his mission is prematurely aborted.

As he approaches the nerve centre of VENOM's base and attempts to gain control of an enemy craft, Matt encounters supplies of four different types of protective mask which are accessed via the keyboard. Selective use of each of their properties dramatically improves his chances of success. The Penetrator temporarily dematerialises the body, allowing it to pass through solid objects, while the bouyant qualities of the Jackrabbit mask are particularly useful when negotiating long stretches of sea. Masks are collected in boxes of 99 units which count down as they are used.

Status displays show score, energy meter and current status of masks, while a scrolling message provides extra information where necessary.

As each level is completed, Matt decodes the password to the next. Typing this in at the beginning of a game unlocks the teleport gate to the appropriate level and another desperate attempt to rescue Scott.

" Every game in the MASK series is an improvement over the last – and VENOM Strikes Back **is definitely the best of the cartoon-based series. What's most impressive to me is the way that each game differs tremendously from every other – unlike, for example, the** Renegade **series – but each still ties in strongly with the base subject of the TV programme. The latest in the series is superbly presented but also contains a playable and addictive game. The graphics are, without a doubt, the most impressive part of the game. Apart from being amazingly colourful and intricately detailed they're also superbly animated – which, when you take a look at the amount that's moving, is pretty impressive. But there's more to it than that: it requires a great deal of thought, planning and strategy if you're to get anywhere with it. The MASK series must be a real collector's pack now – all three are well worth getting – but** VENOM Strikes Back **is simply the icing on the cake. "**

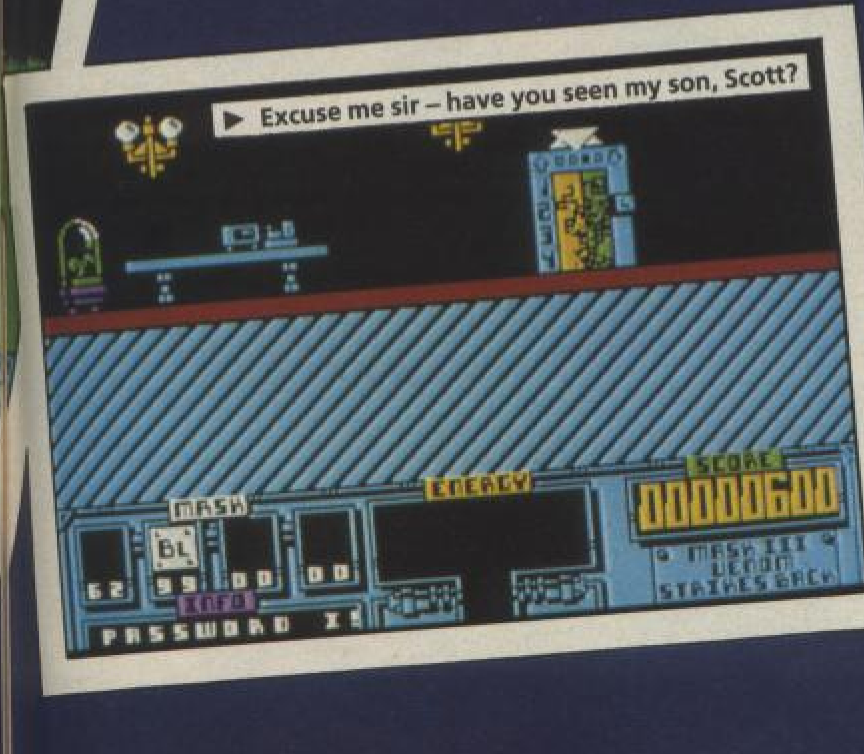
PAUL 91%

" Gremlin strike back with a vengeance! Graphically, MASK II **was a definite improvement on** MASK I**; the sequel to the sequel goes one further in its excellent use of colour and detail. Matt Tracker is cutely animated, even down to the rhythmic turning of his head as he bounds along the moon's bright surface. Gameplay, very much in the style of** Exolon **and** Yeti **has the added bonus of freedom of movement; you can usually jump back into the screen you've just left, avoiding a VENOMous onslaught of enemy fire. The complexity of the unfamiliar lunar terrain and the properties of the different masks ensure plentiful variety. Learning when and where to use each mask is an addictive process of trial and error; there's nothing like a premature plunge into the sea or a sudden untimely re-materialisation to keep you going back for more. Scrolling is smooth, collision detection is accurate and control is surprisingly fast. It all contributes to a polished, sophisticated and extremely compelling arcade adventure. Ignore it at your peril! "**

KATI 90%

" VENOM is definitely striking back with this great new addictive game from Gremlin. It's basically just a horizontally scrolling shoot 'em up but it's just packed full of detailed graphics and challenging puzzles that will have you glued to your screen for hours. Right from the start of the game you're confronted a variety of nasties that all have their own way of destroying you. Once you've memorised the attack patterns then the game does get a bit easier and you can get further. I loved the way that once you enter a password you can go to that level through one of the four transporters. It saves a lot of time and stops the first few levels getting monotonous. Every screen is full of excellently designed objects and characters, all on an atmospheric background of moons and mountains. The animation on each screen adds a dimension of realism with rippling water and pretty detail! Brilliant colour, fantastic sound and there's even a good game in there somewhere. VENOM Strikes Back **is another great game in the MASK series. "**

NICK 91%



COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: a superb range of colourful and detailed characters with a wide range of realistic and animated backgrounds
Sound: great title tune from Benn, with above average spot effects
Options: definable keys
General rating: the superb presentation enhances a very playable and addictive game. *VENOM Strikes Back* will appeal to adventure and shoot 'em up fans alike

Presentation	93%
Graphics	93%
Playability	90%
Addictive qualities	91%
OVERALL	**91%**


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Each of the six most original entries will be rewarded with a case of Irn-Bru containing 24 cans. CRASH accepts no responsibility for any damage which may be caused by winners unaware of the potential of their new-found strength and, as always, the decision of the magazines's appointed judges is final.



SHANGHAI KARATE

Producer: **Players**
Retail price: **£1.99**
Authors: **Kevin Parker and Jabba Severn**

The Changchun Academy, which based its disciplines on the secret karate scrolls, was the most famous karate school in northern China. A failed former pupil, Wang Chen bore a terrible grudge and massacred both masters and students in one terrible night of carnage. Only Lo Yin survived to make a desperate (and ultimately successful) attempt to transport the precious scrolls to the safety of Shanghai. Mission accomplished, Lo was lured into a dangerous dragon temple and never seen again.

The player takes the part of Lo Yin (player two can take the part of Wang) in an attempt to relive the six levels of his journey to Shanghai. In an underground cave and on the Great Wall Lo meets one of Wang's men in single combat. Using 16 different moves he attempts to chop, kick, sweep and block his way to success by reducing his opponent's energy to zero four times.

Following a battle with Wang's men on the shores of the Yangtze river, Lo reaches Shanghai. The enemy attempts to defeat him twice more (in the harbour and the city sewers) before Lo enters the dragon temple and enacts the ending of his unfinished tale.



► Nice graphics, shame about the gameplay . . .

CRITICISM

● " Another budget offering fails to hit the mark. The backdrops are colourful, the sound is atmospheric – it's just the gameplay that leaves a lot to be desired. Wang's men aren't particularly hard to defeat; a few well-placed kicks and you're well on your way to mediocre success. Unfortunately you have to beat each opponent four times. With the sixtieth consecutive punch your interest begins to wane . . . Any remaining excitement is quickly dispelled by the slow movement of the fighters. When Lo Yin jumps, for example, he floats in slow motion through the Shanghai sky – a nasty experience and one, on the whole, that is best avoided. "

KATI **41%**

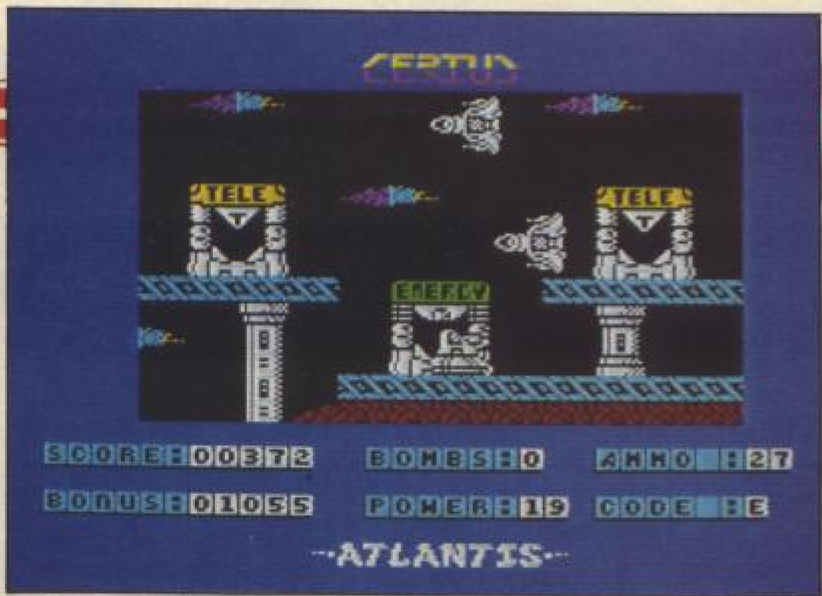
● **" Players have a great gift of producing a product with super presentation, clear concise instructions and great sound (very much like Code Masters) – but, yet again, a game which is only mildly addictive. Like most games of its genre** Shanghai Karate **requires little skill – just constant use of one or two moves to defeat the computer opponent. The graphics and sound are the only real drawing points of the game. However, the overall attraction of** Shanghai Karate **diminishes after a few games due to the vapid gameplay. One plus point though: the gong sound on the 128K is sheer brilliance (but not really worth £1.99). "**

PAUL **48%**

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Sinclair, Kempston
Graphics: attractive backgrounds with slowly animated, but detailed, main characters
Sound: great gong sound, with white noise effects
Options: sound on/off
General rating: visually appealing but lacking playability due to bad animation

Presentation	57%
Graphics	60%
Playability	41%
Addictive qualities	40%
OVERALL	**45%**



CERIUS

Producer: **Atlantis**
Retail price: **£1.99**
Authors: **Graham, David and Adrian Shaw**

The evil leader Rogorf is causing havoc on the planet Cerius. In a dastardly attempt to get the necessary iron ore to make his army of Phibiatrons even more powerful, he has enslaved the planet's peaceful people and has forced them into the mines. Not surprisingly, you are the planet's only hope.

You enter your armoured Avenger V4 and set off on your journey through Rogorf's complex. The series of flick-screen platforms and walkways is divided into different sections each of which is guarded by a particularly fierce Phibiatron. These guards must be defeated to gain a letter of the scrambled code which gives access to the next level. Meanwhile other Phibiatrons fly in from the left, firing missiles. Each direct hit or collision reduces power points. Once power reaches zero the game is lost.

The player's tank is equipped with an initial armoury of 40 missiles and one bomb. Entering ammunition pods boosts weapon supplies while other pods increase the tank's equipment or provide extra energy.

At the end of each level, which must be completed within a given time limit, the screen prompts you to enter the appropriate code. Unscramble the letters you have collected, type them in and you're well on your way to Rogorf's lair.

PAUL

" If I ever imagined an Exolon**-looking budget game then this would be it. Just like** Exolon, Cerius **is very attractive (although contains less variation) and smartly presented. Initially the game is quite puzzling, but after a few games, with a bit of planning, you can easily complete the first few levels. It's sad to see such a small play area but the scrolling is smooth and the graphics colourful. After a rest, Atlantis have come back to the market with a great little game. "**

70%

KATI

" Apart from the fact that the playing area only takes up about a quarter of the screen, Cerius **is enjoyable and competently presented. The graphics are colourful, the Phibiatrons are carefully drawn and the gameplay is complicated enough to keep you playing for more than a couple of hours. In the end, though, it probably won't be much longer than that. Very much like a watered down version of** Exolon, Cerius **doesn't present that high a challenge and your initial enthusiasm is more likely to be wooed away by one of the faster, more demanding games on your shelf. Still – it's fun while it lasts and, for £1.99, definitely worth a try. "**

68%

COMMENTS

Joysticks: Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: very colourful with intricate detail on all characters and scenery
Sound: above average title tune and spot effects
General rating: a smart *Exolon* clone at a cheap price

Presentation	80%
Graphics	75%
Playability	74%
Addictive qualities	68%
OVERALL	**70%**

PROWLER

Producer: **Mastertronic**
Retail price: **£1.99**
Authors: **Icon Design**

The outpost planet Ferantoo is under attack from a wicked force of alien Peradusians. Taking control of Prowler, the Northall Q15-C assault craft, the player can choose from a selection of ten different missions and five difficulty levels (Rookie to Top Gun) as he attempts to protect his planet from the invading alien ships.

The mission is viewed from the cockpit of the Prowler aircraft, looking over a 3-D environment of mountains and sky. Complex instruments, including an altimeter, vertical velocity and ground speed indicators are at the pilot's disposal, plus full control over the craft's height, speed and direction.

The position of the enemy is indicated on an adjustable radar screen. Once alien craft come within visible range they can be eliminated via a targetting system using five different types of missiles. Shields provide extra protection; a status display shows their current strength.



CRITICISM

● " At its best *Prowler* is a very bad simulation of an aircraft simulator; it certainly doesn't create any real sense of flight. Although the instruments indicate that you're hurtling through the sky at incredible speeds, the ground below doesn't move a single inch. The complex dials on the instrument panel are largely useless and there, presumably, just for show. There's not much action to speak of since it takes ages for the aliens to arrive (perhaps the attack was a false alarm!). As for exhilaration and a sense of achievement – forget it. The only thing you're likely to get from this game is a headache. Either that or a burning sense of loss as you think of all the goodies you could have spent your money on. "

KATI **13%**

● **" This must be the most confusing £1.99 anyone could ever spend. The instructions do little to help the player, just listing the numerous key functions, and reciting a pathetic little story of Ursa Minor Delta-V. The main screen display is much like** Infiltrator, **containing many gauges and scanners, but outside the shell of the craft is a bleak wilderness in which very little happens. My main criticism of** Prowler **is that it gives you no feeling of speed. There are plenty of power and thrust keys but none of them make what little scenery there is move at all. The various weapons available should also make the game a challenge to play, but they all have the same feeble effect on the alien ships. Overall** Prowler **is a very poor attempt at an earthbound** 3-D Starfighter **(itself a very simple game). Uneventful and unimpressive. "**

PAUL **20%**

COMMENTS

Joysticks: none
Graphics: appalling. No animation on a poorly drawn landscape
Sound: simple blips
Options: five difficulty levels and ten different missions
General rating: a terrible flight sim lacking atmosphere and addictiveness

Presentation	40%
Graphics	25%
Playability	10%
Addictive qualities	08%
OVERALL	**14%**

PSYCHO PIG UXB

Producer: **US Gold**
Retail price: **£8.99 cassette, £12.99 disk**
Authors: **Software Creations from the Jaleco *Pigs And Bombers* coin-op**

The crowds are cheering, the players walk out on to the screen, the whistle goes and, amidst squeals of snuffling excitement, the porkiest match of the season is about to begin!

The basic rules of this porcine game are taken from the coin-op, *Pigs and Bombers*, yet to be released in the arcades. One or two players join a group of intrepid piglets on a playing area marked out by a series of numbered, black time bombs. When the referee blows his whistle, all the pigs attempt to pick up the bombs and throw them at each other. Once dispatched, a bomb begins its countdown to explosion. Any pigs in the immediate vicinity of the blast die a sudden, untimely death. (Unlike their opponents, players have four chances to survive a fatal blast.) Particularly accurate or amorous pigs are in with an advantage. A direct hit kills an opponent immediately; stealing up on unsuspecting piglets to give them a kiss embarrasses them into a useful fit of momentary disorientation.

Different pigs react differently to being kissed or attacked. Before play commences the program gives a run-down of your opponents, including their name and characteristics. Metal pigs are particularly hard to defeat and require two or three hits before they blow up.

Some pigs leave behind bonus icons when they explode. Collecting these can increase throwing power, gas other pigs (while providing you with a useful gas mask) or boost running ability.

Other extras include a blast suit (protection against one direct hit), smart bombs (to clear the whole screen) and extra carrying power.

Play is divided into a series of rounds interspersed with a bonus level. Pigs pop up from craters in the ground inviting you to kiss them before they shyly pop down again. Kiss as many pigs as possible to see your bonus rating and your status as porky psycho rise.

NICK

" Yeah, blow up them cute little pigs and save your bacon (groan!). Psycho Pig UXB **may not be a fantastically brilliant game and it may not have a super-human hero in it, but I like it. All you have to do is run around the screen blowing up your opponents, collecting bonus objects and rescuing little piglets (ahhh). There are a variety of piggy pals to blow up, some wearing their cool shades and some almost in their birthday suits! Tim Follin's 128K music really gets the foot tapping and makes every pig look like he's doing a jig.** Psycho Pig UXB **is full of surprises and has some very nice graphics here and there, so don't hog all those blockbuster games, play with the pigs! "**

70%



PAUL

" Well if this is the sort of arcade game that Jaleco produce then perhaps they're wise to keep their machines in Japan. The transfer to the Spectrum is not the problem – in fact, Software Creations have done a fine job – the fault lies with the arcade machine in the first place. Games like this are only suited to the arcade atmosphere. They'll keep you addicted for five or six goes, but any more and you're bored! Such a game should never have been licensed by US Gold in the first place. Psycho Pig UXB **won't keep any computer owner hooked for more than a few days. The options screen is about the best part of the game – at least it's not cluttered up with farmyard creatures.** Psycho Pig UXB **isn't even funny! With such bad material the programmers could do little better. "**

50%

KATI

" Having got their hands on a real porker of a game, US Gold have taken almost every chance they've got to ham it up. The object is surprisingly simple and incredibly silly; a prime recipe for excellently addictive play. As it stands, Psycho Pig UXB **is quite good fun – it would have been even better if a bit of colour had been included. The piggy parade at the beginning of each game gives a tantalising list of colour-coded names (obviously left over from the coin-op). Unfortunately as there are no colours on this conversion, none of them are in the least bit relevant. All the pigs look exactly the same, so in the scuffling, snuffling fray you can't really tell them or their particular traits of character apart. The arena which could have been bursting with humorous activity just looks pale, tired and wan. It doesn't spoil the pleasure of bombing porky piglets but it doesn't mean that this is one of those conversion which is unlikely to hog the limelight for very long. "**

75%



COMMENTS

Joysticks: Cursor, Kempston, Sinclair
Graphics: porky characters with no backgrounds
Sound: good ol' country barn dance music on the 128K playing throughout the game
Options: continue play option when dead, definable keys
General rating: initially addictive, but lacking any long-lasting appeal

Presentation	70%
Graphics	50%
Playability	69%
Addictive qualities	71%
OVERALL	**70%**

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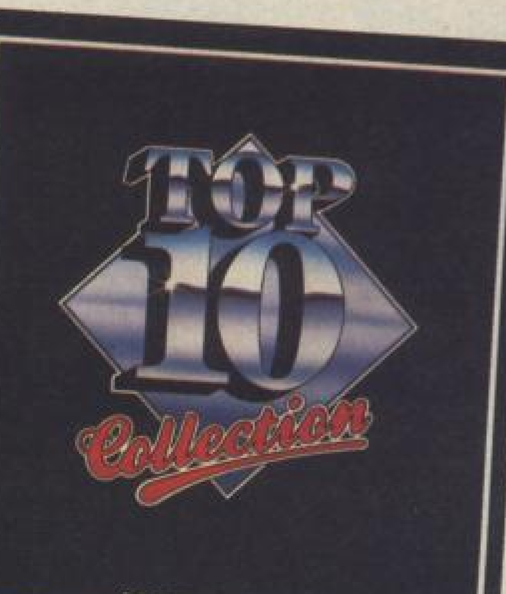
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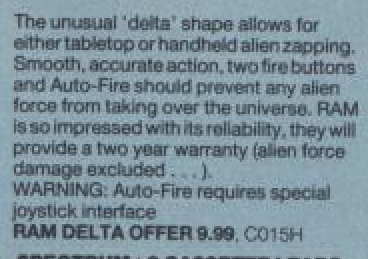
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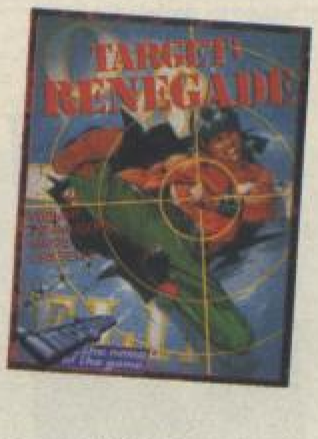
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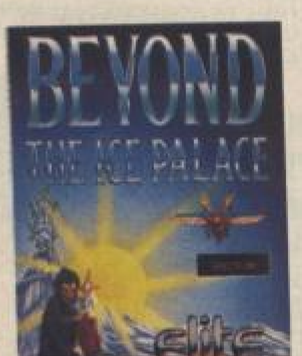
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John Richardson: Jetman! CRASH Reviewers revealed! Match Day Challenge! Maps: Fairlight II, Firelord, Avenger, Dandy!

No 38 March 1987
Fanzines! Designer: Bernie Drummond! Maps: Cobra, Impossaball, Uridium! MIDI!

No 39 April 1987
Arcades Update! The Z88! Programmer: Steve Taylor! Maps: Nosferatu, Double Take, Future Knight, Feud!

No 40 May 1987
Terminal Man returns! Playing Tips supplement! Maps: Short Circuit, Antiriad, Conquest, Into The Eagle's Nest, Sceptre Of Bagdad, Dragon's Lair II, Thrust II, Fat Worm Blows A Sparky, Tarzan, Aliens!

No 41 June 1987
Programmer: Mike Singleton! Industry Today! Adventure Trail supplement! Maps: Saboteur II, Head Over Heels! Multitrackers! 128 Bugs!

No 42 July 1987
16-page OINK! pull-out! Living Daylights film FX! Programmer: Pete Cooke! Maps: Auf Wiedersehn Monty, Hydrofool, Rasterscan!

No 43 August 1987
The +3 arrives! Run It Again runs the Gauntlet clones! Big trouble at THE BUG! CRASHtionnaire results! CRL's 3D Gamemaker! Maps: Enduro Racer, Flash Gordon!

No 44 September 1987
Programmer: David Aubrey-Jones on Mercenary! The Sega Master System! Is Homegrown Software Healthy?! Tech Tips: that Swift Disc! Forum: Barbarian backlash continues! The CRASH Challenge! Maps: Vampire, The Curse Of Sherwood! Tips galore for Killed Until Dead!

No 45 October 1987
Run It Again: the kick-'em-ups! The CRASH History Part One! In The Arcades! The Budget Boooooom! How stars are born: selling your game! On The Screen logo winners! Maps: Game Over, Wonder Boy!

No 46 November 1987
16-page 3D section and glasses! The 3D Story! The CRASH History Part Two! News from the PCW Show! The CRASH Challenge! Graphics and Sound Specialists! The Fanzine File! Maps: Exolon, Panzadrome, Mutants!

No 47 December 1987
16-page Judge Death pull-out! 2000AD's Odyssey! Every Tie-In Ever Made! Copying games the legal way! Run It Again: Those Racing Games! The Christmas List! Maps: Indiana Jones, Dizzy!

No 48 Xmas 1987/88 (January 1988)
Pull-out poster! A Sally Down Arcade Alley – Arcade Action! Tie Me In – Part Two of the Tie-ins feature! The CRASH History Part Three & Four! Lloyd Mangram's Lookback! The CRASH Directory! Going To Bed With CRASH! The CRASH Challenge! CRUNCH – The CRASH Fanzine! A second helping of 3D! Maps: Yogi Bear, Mercenary, Tai-Pan!

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16-page Tech Niche supplement focusing on hardware and utilities! The CRASH Challenge! Write Your Own Adventures – GAC versus PAW! Fanzine File! Maps: Platoon, Andy Capp Handy, Garfield, Driller!

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SPECTRUM plus £300 worth of software, 100 mags. Sell for £150 o.n.o. Tel: 0454 418106 ask for Jonathan Evans.

AMSTRAD CPC464 with mono monitor, software (mostly games), magazines and books. Over £350 RRP, will sell for just £150. Contact: Lars Janssen, *38 Marshall Avenue, Egloshayle, Wadebridge, Cornwall PL27 6BB*.

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FOR SALE Spectrum +2 still boxed, comes with Cheetah 125 joystick and £370 of software. Will sell for £200 ono Tel: 01 390 7862 and ask for Alex Adland.

HARDWARE SWAP

I'VE GOT TWO +3s, one must go. Open to all offers, hardware, software, cash. Don't be afraid to write with offers to: Martin O'Connor, *56 Whittington Hill, Old Whittington, Chesterfield, Derbyshire S41 9HA*.

HARDWARE WANTED

WANTED PRINTER & INTERFACE to suit 48K ZX Spectrum (not thermal type). Write to: David Crozier, *31 Greenacres, Newtownabbey, Co. Antrim, Northern Ireland BT36 6NL*.

WANTED BROKEN OR FAULTY Speccy 128s for spares etc. Write stating price and condition for fast offer. Steve Taylor, *No.1 Bleachfield House, Thurso, Caithness KW14 8DW*.

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12-PACK a dozen unique games for the 48K Spectrum for only £2.99. Free demo if you send tape and SAE. Contact: David Shaw, *25 Redwood Avenue, Royston, Barnsley, S.Yorkshire S71 4JP.*

SOFTWARE FILE LISTS, catergorises, alphabetically sorts your software and keeps a running total of your collections value, All for £3.99. Send cheque payable to: I Spence, *23 Station Road, Burton Latimer NN15 5PB.*

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WANTED SECOND HAND software, originals only please. Write to: Anthony Marshall, *41 Loders Green, Eastfield, Scarborough, N.Yorkshire YO11 3LB.*

WANTED *Dennis Through The Drinking Glass, Return Of The Joystick, Bored Of The Rings* and *Robin Of Sherlock* £5 each. Contact: Ian Eveleigh, *45 Sandcliffe Road, Grantham, Lincs NG31 3EW.*

WANTED *Everyone's A Wally* swap *Out Run, Rampage, Trap Door* or *Uridium +*. Please write to: Martin Curran, *108 Soul Street, Downpatrick, Co. Down, N.Ireland BT30 7NJ.* Phone: 0396 3834 after 4pm.

PBM

GOAL CRAZY computer moderated soccer PBM Player ratings (in each game and abilities), tactics, cups, goal descriptions, internationals. For details send SAE to: George Crozier, *Hazelmount, Pant, Oswestry, Shropshire SY10 9QQ.*

SAT CONG Vietnam PBM If you're 15 or over and interested in playing please send a 13p stamp to: Spencer Wakelam, *50 Mill Hill Road, Irby, Wirral L61 4XF.* Or Phone: 051 648 5418 after 6pm.

I AM STARTING a PBM dictionary. If you would like your game to be included, send details of your game to: Marc Cole, *21 Farmers, Charfield, Glos GL12 8JA.*

PEN PALS

GAMES, GAMES, GAMES. Wanted pen pal to swap games. Send your list for mine. All letters will be answered. Write to: Timo Partala, *Papinkutu 8A19, 33200 Tampere, Finland.*

WANTED PEN PAL preferably male, aged 18-23 and living in the USA, Canada or Australia. I am 18, enjoy most sports and music – especially A-ha. Write to: Brit Conacher, *70 Barnes Road, Highfields, Stafford ST17 9RP.*

18 YEAR-OLD LAD interested in travel, music and sports. Would like a pen pal preferably European. Please enclose photo. Write to: Matthew Macariou, *4 Winster Grove, Fairfield, Buxton, Derbyshire SK17 7RP.*

PEN PAL WANTED male, aged over 14 to swap tips and games. Send your list to: Graham Finney, *14 Greenhill Road, Billinge, Nr. Wigan, Lancs WN5 7LG.*

WANTED American, Australian or Scandinavian Pen Pal. I enjoy music, PBM, computer games etc. Write to: Scott Wilding, *20 Nene View, Islip, Kettering, Northants NN14 3LD.*

GREETINGS is there anyone out there who owns a Speccy +3, or who is interested in computer adventures, PBM and/or FRPG. If so drop a line to: Robin Appleton, *9 Lime Avenue, Swinton, Manchester M27 3FJ.*

WANTED ATTRACTIVE FEMALE pen pal. Aged 15 to 17, interested in films, music and computers. Please enclose recent photo. Write to: Simon Metharam, *Gweleor, King Edward Street, Barmouth, Gwynedd LL42 1AD.*

PEN PAL WANTED about 16 or 17 to talk about life, the universe and everything. Write to: Peter Corrall, *3 Chapel Lane, Carlton, Barnsley, S.Yorks S71 3LE.* Serious people need not apply.

HI, ARE YOU interested in fantasy, horror, Judge Dredd etc? If so then contact: Chris Stephens, *24 Sliececoole Park, Upper Babehill Road, Belfast BT14 8JN.*

16 YEAR OLD MALE would like a female pen pal, aged between 15 and 18. I am interested in computers and sport. Please send a photo. Write to: Mike Kennedy, *19 Chesterfield Road, Eastham, Wirral, Merseyside L62 8DX.*

I AM 20 YEARS OLD and interested in hearing from any female C64 user. I promise to reply to all letters. Write to: Derek Scott, *149 Griffin Close, Bristol Road South, Birmingham B31 2US.*

I AM A LONELY 17 year old male, who is into computers, fashion, hip-hop, karate, radio-controlled cars, discos and squash. I'm looking for a pen pal with the same interests. Write to: Anthony Irvine, *27 Norah Lane, Higham, Nr. Rochester, Kent ME3 7EW.*

PEN PAL CLUB for Speccy owners. For more details contact: Pen Pal Club, Paul Lang, *22 Stratton Drive, Platt Bridge, Wigan, Lancs WN2 5HR.*

PEN PALS WANTED female 15-16. In enjoy sport collecting things, computers and pop/rock music. Write to: Ken Stokes, *5 Farm Road, Cefn Cribwr, Bridgend, Mid-Glamorgan CF32 0HA.*

15 YEAR-OLD female 128+2 owner seeks male/female Pen Pal around the same age. Over 300 mostly lates games to swap. Write to: Dawn Thrower, *68 Havelock Road, Great Yarmouth, Norfolk NR30 3HR.*

17 YEAR OLD male Speccy user would like female, whose into The Cure, Cult, Smiths etc. Please send photo. Write to: Stephen Hardy, *31 Penkvale Road, Moss Pitt, Stafford ST17 9EY.*

HELLO, I WOULD like a pen pal to swap games with. I have loads of games to swap. Phone: Lye 6575 and ask for Darren. I look forward to your calls.

FEMALE PEN PAL WANTED between 10 and 12, likes computers and music. Please include photo. Write to: Colin Corbett, *161 Hurlingham Road, Walton, Liverpool L4 9SR.*

BROTHERS SEEK TWO attractive females 16. Interests: sports, pop, computers. Please send photos. Write to: The Brothers Luke/Chris Hessey, *9 Adelphi Close, Ings Road Est, Hull, North Humberside HU8 0SP.* Tel: 0482 781465 after 4pm.

19 YEAR-OLD MALE wants female aged 15 to 20, who likes music and general life. Send photo if possible to: Karl Pitcher, *51 Marwin Close, Martock, Somerset TA12 6HL.*

IF YOU WANT someone witty, bright, aged 15, into computer games, music and karate, then scribble to: Colin McGinley, *Ave Henri Houssaye, 16 1410 Waterloo, Belgium.* Male/female, merci buckets.

WOULD YOU LIKE a pen pal in the country of high taxes, submarines, Bjorn Borg, Abba, Europe, computers and swap games? Write to: Jimmy Jonsson, *Blabarsvagen 8, 331 43 Varnomo, Sweden.*

PEN PALS WANTED male or female for Speccy teenager owner from anywhere in the world. Write to: Andrew Finch, *76 Furze Cap, Sandygate, Kingsteignton, Newton Abbot, Devon TQ12 3TF.*

PEN FRIEND WANTED from anywhere. I'm 18 and into music and I've just got a 48K Spectrum. Photo appreciated. Write to: Matthew Macariou, *4 Winster Grove, Fairfield, Buxton, Derbys SK17 7RP.*

WANTED FEMALE PEN PAL around 15 years. Interested in Spectrum from anywhere in Europe, America or Australia, except Turkey. English must be spoken. Send photo and list of games if possible to: Goldmund Feely, *Dunganstown, Kilbride, Co. Wicklow, Republic Of Ireland.*

PEN PAL WANTED to swap games. I have over 550 games. Write to: Simon Mouncher, *23 Vulcan Close, Padgate, Warrington, Cheshire WA2 0HL.*

PEN PAL WANTED preferably from outside the UK. I am 15. Write to Stephen Ovington, *Firbogs Cottage, Pittodrie, Aberdeenshire AB5 9HS.*

TWO ATTRACTIVE GUYS seek two attractive girls. Send photo. Our interests include sport, computers and music. What are you waiting for girls? Get writing! Stephen and David, *7 Alexandra Crescent, Pemberton, Wigan, Lancs WN5 9JP.*

PEN PALS WANTED I like computers cricket and letter writing. So get writing to me, OK? Ian Williams, *80 Hillside Park, Bargoed, Mid Glamorgan CF8 8NL.*

MALE, 20, WANTS lots of pen pals. Into games and music especially Fleetwood Mac and Level 42. Anyone at all write to: Simon Bolton, *33 Egton Close, Redcar, Cleveland TS10 4PE.*

WANTED PEN PAL any age, anywhere. Over 800 games. All letters will be replied to straight away. I am 16 years-old. Stephen Scott, *69 Bleerick Drive, Greystone Est, Antrim, Co. Antrim, Northern Ireland BT41 1HX.*

BOY, 12, SEEKS GIRL. Yes it's James Bond's equal, so just scribble to: James Bond, *11 The Ridings, Berrylands, Surbiton, Surrey KT5 8HG.* Please be at least 12 years old and enclose photo.

PEN PAL WANTED to swap games. Male or female, any age. Please write to: Simon Ozzy, *54 Beacon Road, Billinge, Nr. Wigan WN5 7HP.* Phone 0744 892469 after 5pm.

HI I AM 12 years-old and would like a pen pal, male or female to swap 48K games and I have loads of pokes. Write now to: Henry Holland, *170 Cumbrae Crescent, S.Hawthornhill, Dumbarton, Scotland G82 5AR.*

PEN PALS WANTED to swap games. Write to: Gary Fulton, *31 Dean Street, Winsford, Cheshire CW7 1HG.* Hi to Andy, Jim and Andy. (Less of it Gary, you'll be starting a trend!)

OTHERS

I HAVE *Out Run, Uridium, Nebulus* and more. Looking for *Platoon* and more! Also female pen pal 14-15. Send photo. Contact: Gerard Tyrrell, *Park View Drive, Tuam, Co. Galway, Ireland.*

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INTERNATIONAL BELFAST SPECTRUM and pen pal club, as seen on BBC Ceefax, join now, free. Members across Europe. Interests across world. Send SAE to: George St.Clair-Gunn, *10 Bentinck Street, Belfast 15, Northern Ireland.*

If your ad isn't featured this month, don't despair! We'll do our best to get it in ASAP ono (as they say in classifieds), and if the worst comes to the worst (which it hasn't for two months now, but we're still waiting) you can always send the ad in again. Don't forget to fill out the whole form, give unflinching obedience to the small print below, and **USE BLOCK CAPITALS!** (Otherwise the worst could come to the worst.)

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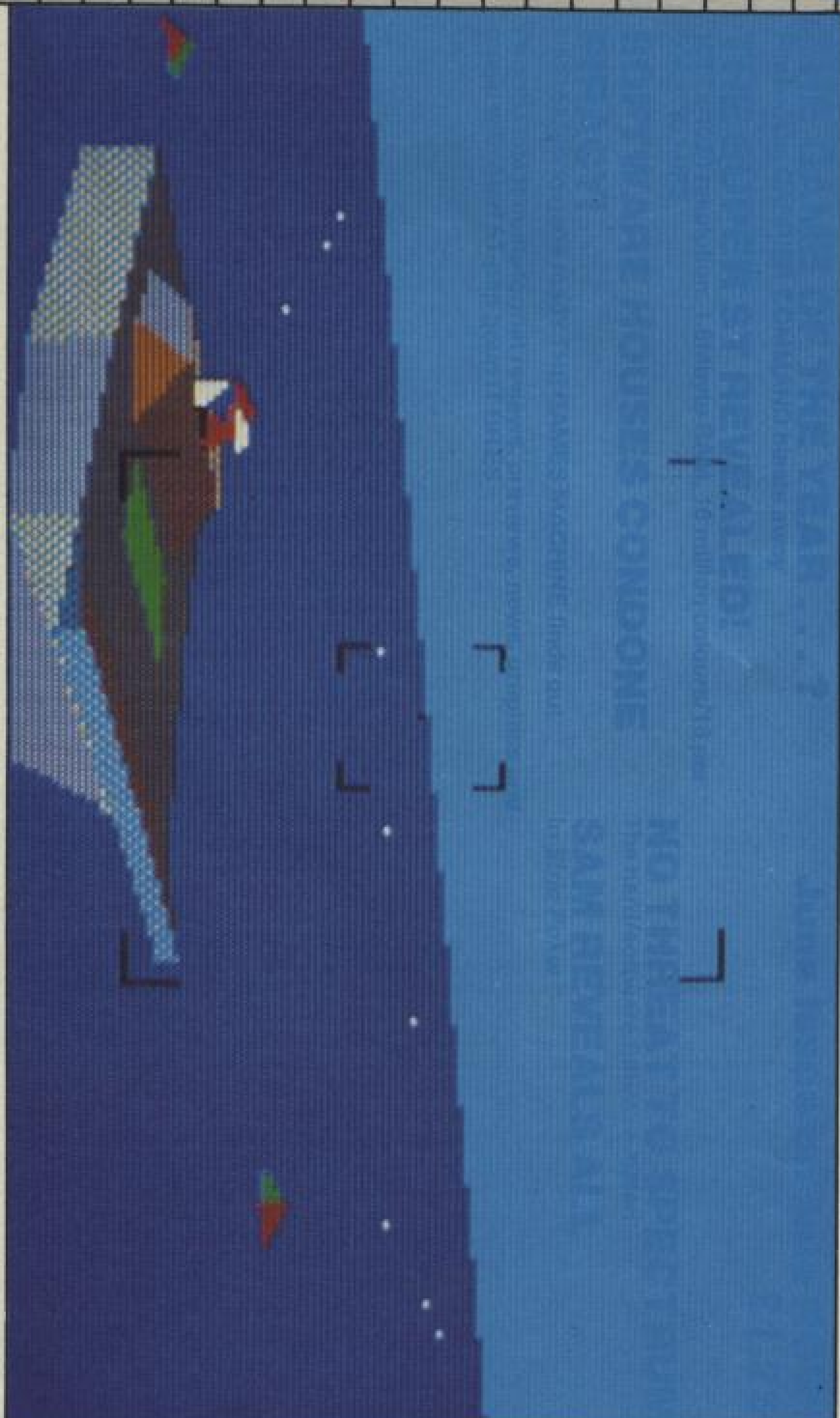
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the
GAMES
machine





MARK+N.A!
KING GRUB!
EVER GET THE FEELING THAT SUMMER IS HERE!?
PARCH!
WHAT'S A MIRAGE?
WHAT'S A FISH?
ITS SOMETHING THAT ISN'T THERE AND YM CAN'T SEE!
EH?
KG
SPLAT!
JUST CHILLIN' OUT MAN!! YEAH!!
KG
ROAST!
KG
KG
WARNING: THE GRUB IS SO COOL HE DOESN'T NEED SUN TAN LOTION. SO WOTCHIT!
SOMEONE TURN THE SPIT ON THE FAT @#!!

THE JUNE CHARTS

HOTLINE TOP 20

1 (1)	MATCH DAY II	OCEAN
2 (2)	RENEGADE	IMAGINE
3 (3)	EXOLON	HEWSON
4 (10)	HEAD OVER HEELS	OCEAN
5 (8)	DRILLER	INCENTIVE
6 (12)	GAUNTLET	US GOLD
7 (9)	ZYNAPS	HEWSON
8 (4)	COMMANDO	ELITE
9 (5)	OUT RUN	US GOLD
10 (14)	THUNDERCATS	ELITE
11 (15)	BUBBLE BOBBLE	FIREBIRD
12 (7)	ENDURO RACER	ACTIVISION
13 (6)	ELITE	FIREBIRD
14 (11)	MATCH DAY	OCEAN
15 (▶)	CYBERNOID	HEWSON
16 (16)	FLYING SHARK	FIREBIRD
17 (19)	COBRA	FIREBIRD
18 (17)	STARGLIDER	FIREBIRD
19 (18)	PAPERBOY	ELITE
20 (-)	WIZBALL	OCEAN

ADVENTURE TOP 10

1 (1)	VULCAN	CCS
2 (2)	LORDS OF MIDNIGHT	BEYOND
3 (3)	ARNHEM	CCS
4 (5)	DESERT RATS	CCS
5 (4)	DOOMDARK'S REVENGE	BEYOND
6 (9)	REBELSTAR RAIDERS	FIREBIRD
7 (8)	THEATRE EUROPE	PSS
8 (6)	TOBRUK	PSS
9 (7)	BATTLE OF BRITAIN	PSS
10 (10)	THEIR FINEST HOUR	CENTURY HUTCHINSON

STRATEGY TOP 10

1 (1)	THE HOBBIT	MELBOURNE HOUSE
2 (3)	SPELLBOUND	M.A.D.
3 (2)	STORMBRINGER	M.A.D.
4 (5)	KNIGHT TYME	M.A.D.
5 (4)	LORDS OF MIDNIGHT	BEYOND
6 (10)	KILLED UNTIL DEAD	US GOLD
7 (8)	THE PAWN	RAINBIRD
8 (9)	DOOMDARK'S REVENGE	BEYOND
9 (11)	HEAVY ON THE MAGICK	GARGOYLE GAMES
10 (▶)	KNIGHT ORC	RAINBIRD

VIDEO TOP 10

1 (▶)	ROXANNE	RCA/COLUMBIA
2 (▶)	RADIO DAYS	RCA/COLUMBIA
3 (▶)	HELLRAISER	NEW WORLD
4 (▶)	LETHAL WEAPON	WARNER
5 (▶)	ANGEL HEART	GUILD
6 (▶)	THE LIVING DAYLIGHTS	WARNER
7 (▶)	PLATOON	RCA/COLUMBIA
8 (▶)	A NIGHTMARE ON ELM ST 3	WARNER
9 (▶)	ALIENS	CBS/FOX
10 (▶)	CHILDREN OF A LESSER GOD	CIC



It's all change in the charts this month. You now have FOUR charts in which to vote. For games featured in the main software review section vote in the HOTLINE chart. Games covered in Samara's Adventure Trail should be voted for in the ADVENTURE chart. And those games requiring specialised thought and planning (like war games) are voted for in the STRATEGY chart. Also, all your favourite videos can be voted for in the new VIDEO chart – old and new, borrowed, but NOT blue!

Just fill in the appropriate form and send your votes off to **CRASH HOTLINE CHART, CRASH ADVENTURE CHART, CRASH STRATEGY CHART** and **CRASH VIDEO CHART:** ***PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire, SY8 1DB.***

DON'T FORGET, every month we'll pick out five winners for each chart. The first will receive £40 worth of software of their choice, a CRASH Hat and a CRASH T-shirt. The four runners-up will each get a CRASH Hat and a CRASH T-shirt – a total of **20** winners. All you have to do is enter . . .

CHART VOTING FORMS .... **page** 106

WINNERS

The winner of the HOTLINE chart's £40 worth of software comes from north Yorkshire . . . he's . . . ***J R Major****. Runners-up are* ***Andrew Kwaan*** *of Windlesham;* ***Carl Foulkes*** *from Telford;* ***Andrew Daly*** *of Goole and* ***G Baker*** *from Bilston.*

Another £40 worth of software (and a CRASH Hat and T-shirt, of course) goes to ***Alex Ng*** *from Colwyn Bay for being the ADVENTURE chart winner. His four runners-up are* ***Jim Shine*** *of Dungarvan;* ***Alex Campbell*** *from London NW6;* ***Raymond Dovey*** *of Halstead and* ***R A Morrell*** *from Shipley.*

The strategical winner of this month's STRATEGY chart software is ***David Hodgson*** *of Shildon. The next four out of the bag (who each get a CRASH Hat and T-shirt) are* ***Jonathan Bell*** *from Ashtead, Surrey;* ***Simon Merrick*** *of Preston;* ***Mark Brennan*** *from Limerick and* ***Fergal Keenan*** *of Carrick-on-Suir in Eire. VIDEO chart winners next month . . .*

WINNERS & PRIZES

COME TELL HEWSON

Issue 51

We had thousands of entries for the *Cybernoid* competition. They ranged from the most complex and detailed pirate ships to comical and colourful creations. The best two came from **Stephen Ward** from County Clare in Eire and **Vernon Chaldecott** in Hants PO9 2HR. They'll each get a fabulous Commtel 828 cordless telephone – ideal when on those intergalactic journeys around the universe. Five second prize winners get a trendy *Cybernoid* sweatshirt. They are . . .
Alexander Herbrand, Germany; C Blythe, Bucks HP10 8JA; Mark Byrne, Surrey; Chris Jones, Preston PR2 4PR; Mark Thompson, Bristol BS20 8HF.
And 25 runners-up get a copy of Raffaele Cecco's great game:
Wim Castermans, Belguim; Paul Dossis, Cheshire CW7 2HG; Robert Joyce, Essex CM1 5BJ; Derek Jenkins, Cardiff CF4 5PU; David Metcalf, Tyne & Wear DH3 2JB; Daniel Ingley, West Midlands DY8 5NQ; Richard Baird, Notts NG19 0DX; James Gleeson, Co.Tipperary, Ireland; Martin Lawless, Lancs BL8 4QA; Edward Anyaeji, London SE1 5ED; R Keeling, Cheshire CW11 0QT; Michael Preedy, Avon BS12 2HX; Martin McKinney, Dorset BH6 4DQ; Mr A D Gallop, Avon BS9 4QP; Steven Nijs, Merseyside L44 4EH; Benjamin Tan, Cheshire WA13 0NP; Andrew Bolton, Manchester M30 0RA; David Edge, Shropshire TF7 5RX; Mr A J Stokes, Co. Durham DL14 6UJ; Paul Hilton, Lincs PE11 2EN; Richard Chaney, N.Humbs HU10 7DZ; Dean Roberts, Birmingham B33 0HT; Alan Charles, Banbury, Oxon; Ross Burton, Essex CM6 1BZ; Neal Parkes, Herts EN6 1PR.

CRASHTIONNAIRE

Issue 51

We'll have the results of the CRASHtionnaire in the next issue. But till then here's the winner of the £50 software prize, plus a CRASH Hat and T-shirt for sending us your views on CRASH. It's **Paul Hollick** from Hants S04 2DB. The four runners-up each get £20 worth of software, plus a CRASH Hat and T-shirt. They are . . . **D C Muncaster, Lancs BB2 5AL; Peter Robinson, Kent CT9 4NA; Ross McDonald, Lincs PE9 3RS; Jason Bees, Bath BA1 7AS.**

CUSTOM ROVER

Issue 51

It's custom around here for everyone to have a say in the judging of art competitions, and we had a terribly difficult time picking out the lucky three winners who'll each have a day out at Land Rover. Anyway, they are **Jonathan Bass** of Essex CM3 4DZ; **Kevin Shaw** from Kent ME1 2QE and **David Reed** from Northampton NN5 6HG. Those three will also receive an *Ikari Warriors* T-shirt and the game. Not unlike the following 30 runners-up who'll also get a T-shirt and the game . . .
David Forsythe, London SE23 2JL; Alex Griffiths, Kent CT3 4ND; Malcolm Moore, Birmingham B14 4JU; Justin Aylen, Mid Glamorgan CF31 4QT; Anders Dunkler, Sweden; John Sandy, London N15 5HF; Gary Hyde, Berks RG14 5LA; Stephen Ward, Co.Clare, Eire; James Culyer, Norwich NR11 8LJ; Peter Daley, Merseyside L37 2JY; Mark Coates, N.Humberside HU10 6ET; Steven Nijs, Merseyside L44 4EH; Darren Ridge, Kent BR8 7QH; Richard Conn, Wilts SN3 4DP; James Bownass, Surrey CR3 3HG; Andrew Nixon, Staffs ST4 7JU; Karl Bamford, Lancs OL11 3BU; Matthew Wilkinson, N.Yorks LS25 6BP; Christopher Blythe, Bucks HP10 8JA; Martin Birkett, S.Humbs DN18 5LU; Conan Friel, Coventry CV2 1AG; Gary Marr, Sheffield S5 8RP; Jonathan Pittock, V/.Yorks BD20 6SN; Michael Brown, W.Yorks WF13 4LQ; Mark Rimmer, Merseyside PR8 4RE; Robert Wainwright, Leicestershire LE17 4RJ; Matthew Treadwell, Surrey KT16 9PF; Martin McInerney, Northampton NN2 7JG; Paul Wakeling, Leics LE6 0DE; Alistair Prins-Moore, London N1 3NJ.

3-DIY

Issue 46

When our Art Director, Markie Kendrick finally decided to give us some of his precious time and judge you're 3-D entries it revealed some exciting results. The overall winner is **Lloyd Naylor** from Leeds LS14 2DJ. He receives a tin a Stabilo pens (as used by Markie himself!), 12 months free subscription to CRASH and a CRASH T-shirt. The two runners-up each get a 12 months free subscription to CRASH and a T-shirt. They are **Philip Corbett** from Warks CV8 1DJ and **Richard Woods** of Lincs LN12 1BQ.

GHAFFLEBETTE GOODIES UP FOR GRABS

Issue 47

Ten winners came up with wonderfully out-of-this-world *2000AD* words to describe Piranha's new *Judge Death* game – and they each receive *2000AD* books, a T-shirt and a copy of the game, all courtesy of Piranha.
Douglas Bryson, Wigtownshire, Scotland DG9 7BS; Stephen Jordan, Saffron Walden, Essex; Neil Griffin, Dartford, Kent DA1 3BH; Peter Hutchison, Hebden Bridge, West Yorkshire HX7 5QP; Paul Norton, Willerby, Hull HU10 8AA; Pierre Scotney, Portishead, Bristol BS20 8BQ; Robert Newall, Shipley, West Yorkshire BD17 5AG; David North, Chard, Somerset TA20 3JN; Darren Leatherbarrow, Lawton, near Warrington WA3 2HY; Jonathan Grebby, Wardley, Gateshead NE10 8YH.
And 20 runners-up receive copies of *Judge Death* . . .
Matthew Welsh, Chippefield, Herts WD4 9DQ; Christian Jones, Milford Haven, Dyfed SA73 3JR; Alistair Gentry, Felixstowe, Suffolk IP11 8AN; R Kunikowski, Walsgrave, Coventry CV2 2AH; Olivia Jane Brown, Ossett, West Yorkshire WF5 0QD; Ian Putnam, Luton, Beds LU4 9NF; Paul Marchant, Guildford, Surrey GU4 8ET; Tony Anderson, near Pontefract, West Yorkshire WF7 7JQ; Matthew Edwards, Barrow-On-Trent, Derby DE7 1HP; Chris Gorman, Ayrshire, Scotland KA13 7PN; Lee Reveley, Coventry, West Midlands CV3 6HT; Russell Pratt, Plymouth, Devon PL8 1HG; Malcolm Young, Seaford, East Sussex BN25 1BQ; Darren Curzon, Maulden, Beds MK45 2AE; Andrew Shadwell, Bicknacre, Essex CM3 4EU; Robin Sivyer, East Grinstead, West Sussex RH19 3DU; Thomas Greenan, Ayrshire, Scotland KA12 9NE; Neil Firth, Hemel Hempstead, Herts HP1 1RH; Daniel Bill, Stanwix, Carlisle CA3 9MS; Lasse Eldrup, 2650 Hvidovere, Denmark.

ROMANTICALLY MINE

Issue 50

One of the very few people who actually solved our romantic wordsquare of two issues ago was **Vincent Milner** of Nottinghamshire NG13 8HQ. He also said that, 'Romantic Robot are so old they think +3s are worn by midget golfers'! He gets a Romantic Robot Videoface Digitiser for his troubles. In our 'designer' competition, second prize winners could choose their prizes from one of Romantic Robot's famous Multiface series or a Multiprint printer interface. The fortunate five who come second are **D Beach** from Oxfordshire OX17 3LU; **John Clifton** from down in Kent DA3 8QY; **Joseph Leiper** up in Aberdeen AB1 5QN; **M Winwood** across in Sheffield S11 and **P T Ebbutt** of Cambridgeshire PE1 4DN. Thirty more designer runners-up who get a choice of *Wriggler*, *Music Typewriter*, *Lifeguard* or *Genie* software are . . .
James MacPherson, Herts AL10 0PR; Colin Townsend, Staffs WS7 8UB; Trefor Thorpe, Dyfed SA31 1TS; Jon Sender, Sheffield S8 8DU; Ian Porter, N.Humbs HU5 5HW; Keith Roberts, Devon PL5 4ET; Kevan Fagan, Liverpool L11 5BB; Alan Henderson, Tyne & Wear DH4 6EF; Anthony Graham, Gloucester GL2 0DN; Matthew Tebbutt, Bristol BS20 8DG; David Green, S.Yorks S8 0BA; Chris Davis, Staffs ST2 7BZ; Robert Dinsdale, Kent ME16 0BS; Paul Jones, Cardiff CF4 6EG; Stephanie Garnett, Northampton NN3 2SS; Paul Preston, Essex IG6 2NW; R Marsden, Sheffield S2 4DA; Matthew Peddlesden, Suffolk IP14 3HB; Marcus Bryant, Surrey GU4 7EL; Peter Wilson, Cleveland TS20 2EL; S D King, Somerset BA9 9HR; Peter Simpson, W.Sussex BN12 6BB; A J Milhench, Lancs OL4 3NH; David Taylor, Newcastle Upon Tyne; Andrew Grier, Bucks MK19 7AG; Tony Voon, London W12 8BY; David Gary Walters, West Midlands WS3 2RF; Steven Streeting, Guernsey, Channel Islands; Geoffrey Hill, Cheshire CW12 3JF; Rob Darke, Hereford HR4 0QD.

All winners, please allow 28 days for the delivery of your prizes. All queries regarding competitions run in CRASH should be sent to **Frances Mable, CRASH,** ***PO Box 10, Ludlow, Shropshire SY8 1DB***. Please don't ring Frances as she has enough trouble reading through all your entries as it is.

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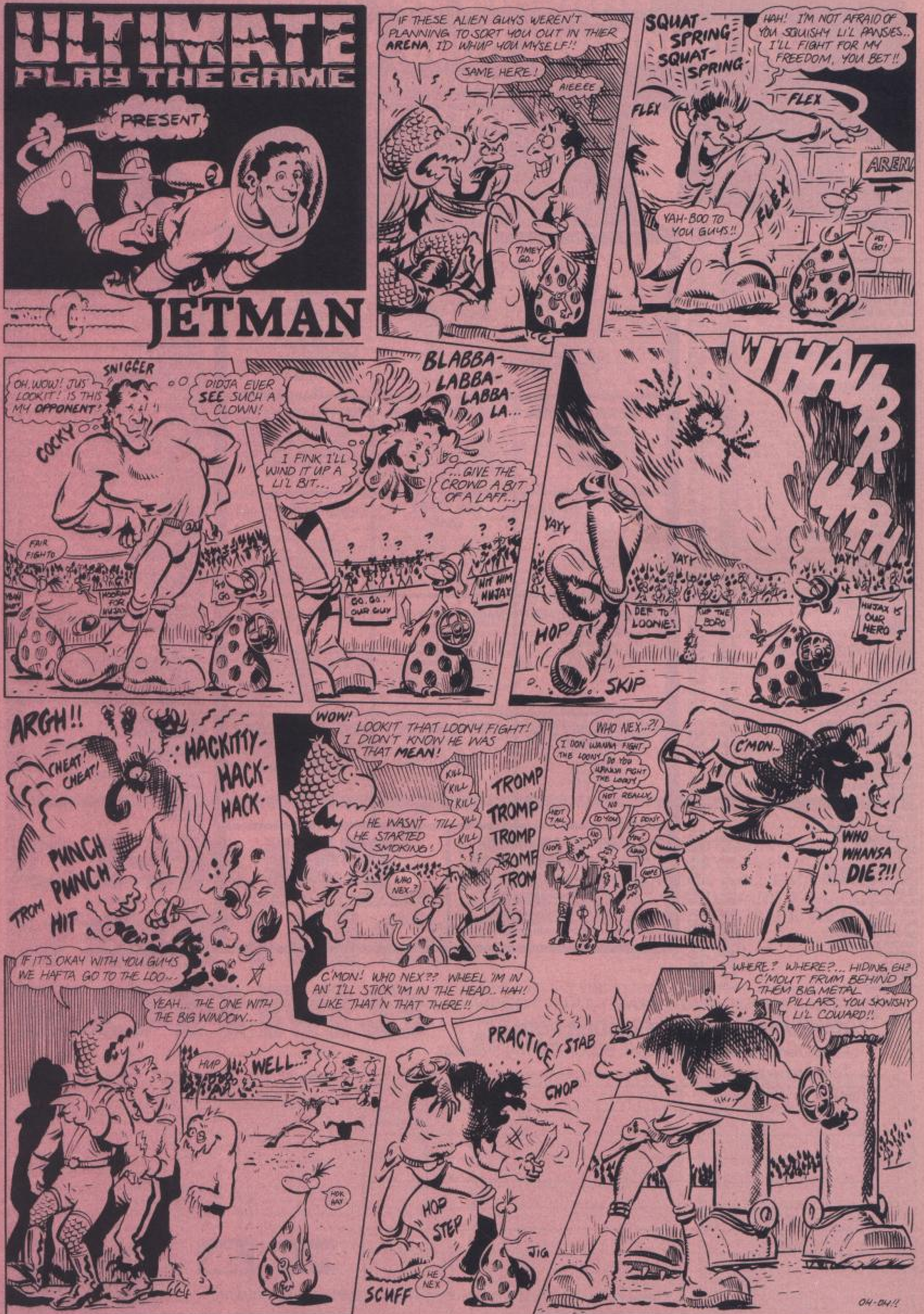
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TIMEY GO..
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HAH! I'M NOT AFRAID OF YOU SQUISHY LI'L PANSIES.. I'LL FIGHT FOR MY FREEDOM, YOU BET!!
FLEX
FLEX
FLEX
ARENA
YAH-BOO TO YOU GUYS!!
SNIGGER
OH, WOW! JUS' LOOKIT! IS THIS MY OPPONENT?
DIDJA EVER SEE SUCH A CLOWN!
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FAIR FIGHT
BLABBA-LABBA-LABBA-LA...
I FINK I'LL WIND IT UP A LI'L BIT...
...GIVE THE CROWD A BIT OF A LAFF...
GO. GO.. OUR GUY
HIT HIM NUJAX
WHAURRUMPH
YAYY
HOP
SKIP
DEF TO LOONIE
UP THE BORO
NUJAX IS OUR HERO
ARGH!!
CHEAT! CHEAT!
HACKITTY-HACK-HACK-
PUNCH PUNCH
TROM
HIT
WOW!
LOOKIT THAT LOONY FIGHT! I DIDN'T KNOW HE WAS THAT MEAN!
HE WASN'T 'TILL HE STARTED SMOKING!
TROMP TROMP TROMP TROMP TROM
WHO NEX..?
WHO NEX..?!
I DON' WANNA FIGHT THE LOONY
NOT REALLY, NO
C'MON...
WHO WHANSA DIE?!!
IF IT'S OKAY WITH YOU GUYS WE HAFTA GO TO THE LOO...
YEAH... THE ONE WITH THE BIG WINDOW...
HUP
WELL..?
C'MON! WHO NEX?? WHEEL 'IM IN AN' I'LL STICK 'IM IN THE HEAD.. HAH! LIKE THAT 'N THAT THERE!!
PRACTICE
STAB
CHOP
HOP
STEP
JIG
SCUFF
HE NEX
WHERE? WHERE?... HIDING, EH? C'MOUT FRUM BEHIND THEM BIG METAL PILLARS, YOU SKWISHY LI'L COWARD!!
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At Silica Shop, we have a dedicated service department of seven full time Atari trained technical staff. This team is totally dedicated to servicing Atari computer products. Their accumulated knowledge, skill and experience makes them second to none in their field. You can be sure that any work carried out by them is of the highest standard. A standard of servicing which we believe you will find **ONLY FROM SILICA**. In addition to providing full servicing facilities for Atari ST computers (both in and out of warranty), our team is also able to offer memory and modulator upgrades to ST computers.

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MEGA ST 2Mb Keyboard + CPU	*£899 (inc VAT)*
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PREVIEW

Coming soon to a Spectrum near you!

HOT STUFF

SUMMER is now upon us, and with the hot summer nights come some hot games. Games that will blow your mind or possibly your Spectrum. These games are so fantastic they've actually been banned on Earth. So until they start filtering back down through the intergalactic pipelines we'll have to take a look at the current games in development from our friendly, local software houses!

Martech have two games ready for release, and both are looking pretty hot! ***Vixen*** should currently be prowling the streets near you now. Take the part of page 3 pin-up Corrine Russell (*The Sun*) who then takes the part of the foxy lady from the planet Granath. We've just received the finished version, and it all looks like quite good fun. Full review in next month's issue.

Martech are also planning to release ***The Fury***. Set in the future, you drive a supercar – ten are available, all at different prices – in battle against various *Mad Max*-like creatures in their own customised vehicles. Things aren't too bad though: you're equipped with missiles on either side of your mean machine and a strong set of side panels for bumping people off the *Rollerball*-like track. If things get a bit too hot to handle you can always just put your foot down and speed off out of trouble. But careful how you drive, though. If you go for too long at such incredible speeds you could reach The Fury – a state beyond all comprehension . . .



► **Can you reach *The Fury* from Martech**

BEST MATES

Forget Little & Large and The Two Ronnies. For the greatest mates around look out for Hark and Kren, the stars of **Gremlin**'s ***Blood Brothers***. A whole planet's livelihood rests in the hands of the two characters. In recent times their planet of Sylonia has been plundered and ravaged by hostile aliens, known colloquially as the Scorpians. It's up to Hark and Kren to jump on their jet-bikes (with laser bolt weapon units fitted as standard) and get the stolen gems back from the planet Scorpia. Its sophisticated defence systems try to destroy you but with your thrustpacks and hand-held laser guns you must enter the mine and regain the ill-gotten treasure. Sylonia's future rest in your hands.

June should also see the release of ***Skate Crazy*** – a streetwise roller skating game – and ***Hercules*** – a gory beat 'em up. All from Gremlin, as is ***Gary Lineker's Super Skills***. The game is played in two parts: in the gym where you must exercise and generally get fit, and out on the training pitch where you must prove your skills by, among other things, dribbling around cones.

Skate Crazy competition .... *page 79*



► *Chubby Gristle* **says, 'Big is beautiful'. But is it?**

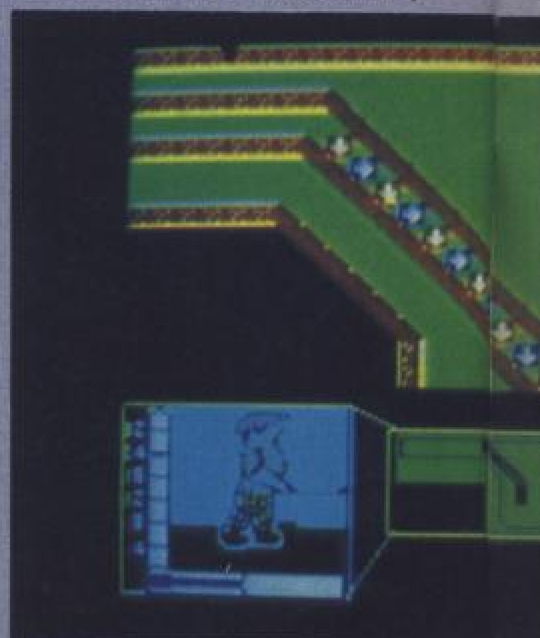


► **Teamwork's the name of the game for the brothers, Hark and Kren**

FOOTBALL CRAZY

Grand Slam also have a footballing game in the way of ***Peter Beardsley's International Football*** – although that won't be out for a while yet. Also from Grand Slam we've ***Chubby Gristle*** and ***Power Pyramids***. The latter is a game of skill and dexterity. Similar to a pinball machine, you must use a pair of flippers to control a ball which must be hit against various power points situated on levels within the pyramid. *Chubby Gristle* and *Power Pyramids* should be available now.

Accolade's latest release takes a less serious look at the sport of golf. ***Mini-Putt*** is based on those miniature 'crazy' golf courses that



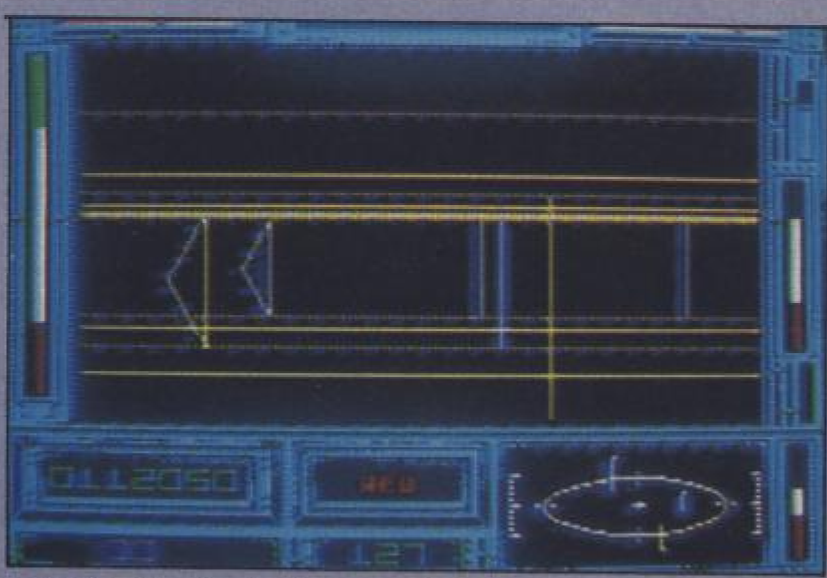
litter the promenades of seaside holiday resorts. The game contains four courses, each depicting a certain theme: famous movies, countries around the world, sports and classic video arcade sequences. Each course contains nine holes. The direction, force and angle of each shot can be adjusted, but you have to be quick otherwise your golfer will get impatient. Play the shot right and he'll be over the moon, but one bad shot and he gets very angry! Three types of obstacles must be overcome: paths, requiring accuracy; windmills, demanding precise timing, and various objects that pop up out of the ground. Once a course is completed you get an overall score.

Mini-Putt competition .... page 32

WORTH THE RISK?

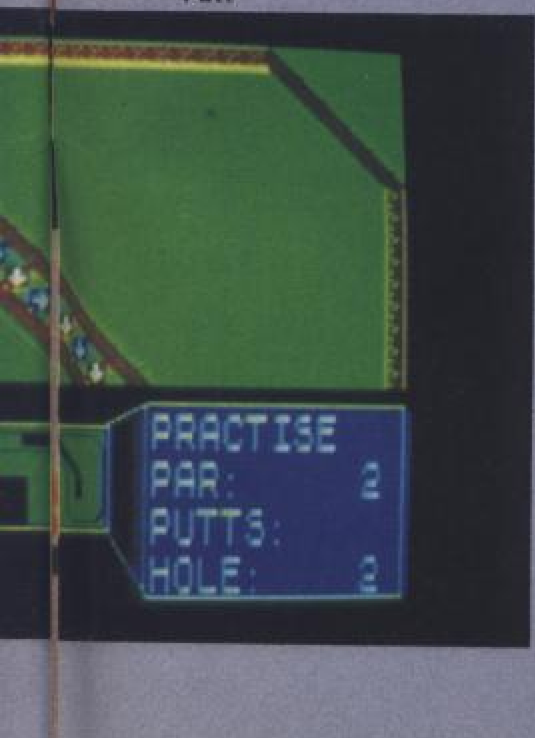
The board game genre has been a bit quiet of late, but **Virgin Games** are soon to change all that. In October we should be able to play their latest Kenner Parker licence, ***R.I.S.K.***. The game features a scrolling map and all the features of the popular board game. And in January '89 Virgin will have ***Cluedo Master Detective***, a version of the classic board game to be found in The States but not well known over here yet.

Cascade's ***19 Part 1 – Boot Camp*** was scheduled for release a couple of months back, but they promise us it'll be out by the time you read this. Mind you, ***Ring Wars*** was chalked in for a March 22 release and where's that! Not to worry though – that'll also be out for June. *Ring Wars* is based around the activity of Ring Worlds – whose sole purpose *was* to locate uninhabited worlds and bleed them dry of all life, but something has gone dangerously wrong . . . Now the Ring Worlds are invading our solar system, absorbing everything in their path, and only you can stop them. The game contains complex and



detailed 3-D vector graphics, through which you must move with your sophisticated intelligence gathering devices and enter the heart of the Ring World – to kill it for ever. But can you also escape before it kills YOU?

► *Mini-Putt* – **a great improvement over** *Skoda-Putt*



THE HIGH LIFE

CRL, the publishers of last month's 90% CRASH Smash *Sophistry*, had trouble in naming their next game, so who better to contact than the illiterate bunch of reviewers at CRASH Towers, and this is what we came up with (well, almost). Their next game is to be called ***Hi-Rise Scaffold Construction Set***, and is basically a platforms and ladders designer. Using this sophisticated program it is possible to design your own platform arcade game from scratch – without any programming knowledge whatsoever. As well as being able to design all the graphics and define where objects appear, you can make your own sound effects, write a scrolling message for each screen and program the height of jumps etc . . .

War game fans will be happy to hear that the follow-up to **CCS**'s *Overlord* is soon on its way. It's called ***Stalingrad***, and is again written by Ken Wright. It should be available at the beginning of June.

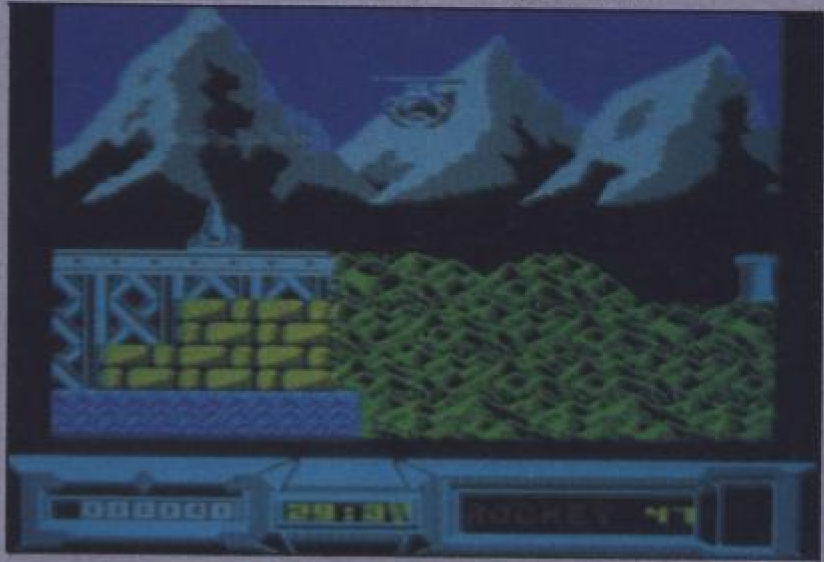
Hewson, the company that some people are now calling the new Ultimate because of their consistently high standards and success, have ***Battle Valley*** as their next release. Some terrorists have captured two medium range nuclear missiles and you've got 30 minutes to stop the annihilation of the planet. You have control over either a tank or a helicopter which moves over the horizontally scrolling landscape and attempts to blow up the two missile silos. If the preview version is anything to go by we've another great game in store.

Much has been said about *Football Manager* clones over the years. But now we'll really find out how good they all were, for **Addictive Games** are about to release ***Football Manager 2***. Apparently, it contains realistic graphics, an animated scoreboard, various playing styles, and even a player suspension facility (just shows how up-to-date it is)!

REBEL RETURNS

Finally, this month sees a new company to the Spectrum market. **Target Games** was founded in March by Julian Gollop, who you may remember programmed the Firebird games *Rebelstar Raiders* and *Chaos*. The first release from Target Games is ***Laser Squad*** – a strategy game requiring arcade reflexes – in August.

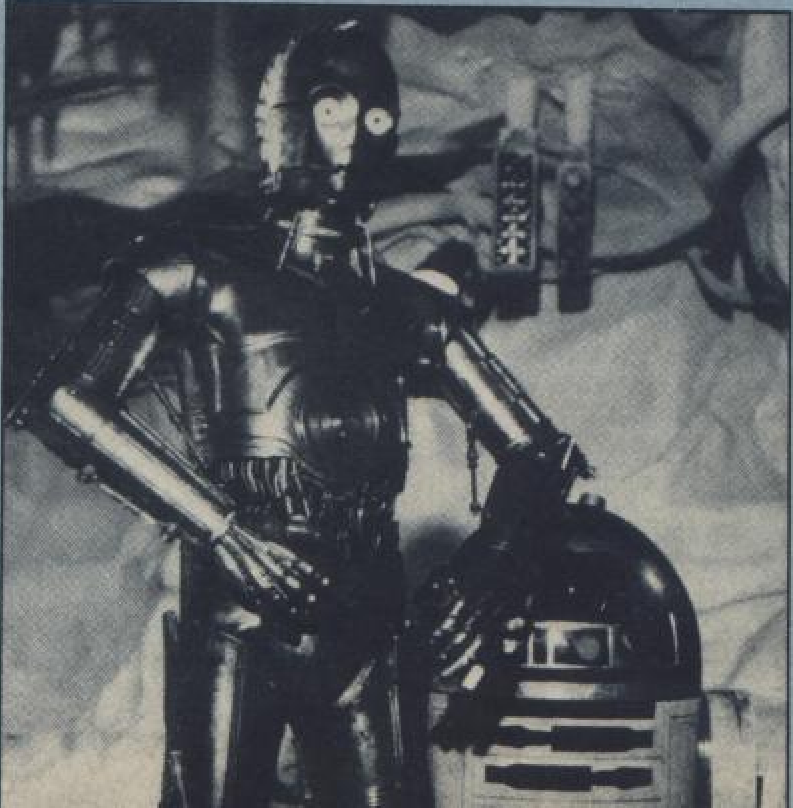
► **It's time to get your chopper out . . .**



SUMMIT CHEAP

LAST MONTH it was Zeppelin Games and this month it's **Summit Software**, the latest budget label to be formed. This new label is an extension of **Alternative Software** and all releases will be £2.99. The new label will be a mixture of original products and re-releases of old games. The first four releases are ***Cannibals From Outer Space***, ***1999***, ***Gateway To Hell*** and ***Battlecars*** (66%, Issue 13).

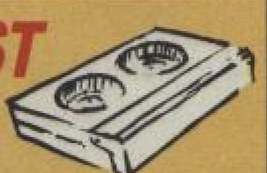
Fans of the *Droids* TV series will be happy to hear that the cartoon versions of R2-D2 and C-3PO have been snapped up by **M.A.D.**, who say that ***Droids*** is aimed at the under-14s. However, we're sure that the Lucasfilm stars of the *Star Wars* trilogy will appeal to all – especially Steve Jarratt, our exalted editor, who's loopy about the *Star Wars* films. A dastardly gang have escaped from a high security prison and for some strange reason the robotic twosome have been captured by these evil characters. You take control of C-3PO (the tall, golden robot) who must escape from his captures and kill off the ever-increasing number of opponent droids.



Et Al

GOGGLE!

REWIND TO THE PAST



DOMINIC HANDY on video

AFTER last month's lull in major video film releases, you'll be happy to hear that there's many a good film to watch over the next couple of months. Warner Home Video's major release of May is undoubtedly ***Full Metal Jacket*** (Warner, 18). **Stanley Kubrick** – who's acclaimed credits include such cult films as *Lolita, A Clockwork Orange, 2001 A Space Odyssey* and *The Shining* – directs the action loosely based around the novel *The Short Timers* by Vietnam veteran Gustav Hasford. **Matthew Modine** (*Birdy*) plays an 18-year-old marine recruit, Private Joker. The story contains two distinct sections – Joker's harrowing basic training on Parris Island and his real life combat experiences out in the Vietnam wastelands (superbly shot in London's docklands). The first part is so realistic and involving that as a result the second half suffers. As with all Kubrick films *Full Metal Jacket* is, thankfully, unglorifying in its approach to a distasteful subject. A startlingly different telling of the Vietnam story – as good as, if not better, than *Platoon* – but, as with every Kubrick film, tackling the subject from a completely different angle.

▼ Stanley Kubrick's *Full Metal Jacket*



Mind yer backs, folks! Harry's coming through. Yes, ***Bigfoot And The Hendersons*** (CIC Video, PG) – originally called *Harry And The Hendersons* in the US – finally makes its way to the video shelves on June 8. The terrific **John Lithgow** (*Twilight Zone – The Movie, 2010*) stars as the father of an all-American family who collides with a sasquatch-type hairy beast while on a shooting holiday. As anyone in such a situation would do, they decided to load it up on their station wagon and take it back home. Of course, a dormant eight-foot-tall hairy creature isn't something you want to show to the neighbours, but when Harry awakens he runs riot throughout the Henderson's household, knocking chunks out of walls and demolishing chairs. However, it turns out that Harry's really a lovable characters and no-one wants to see him hurt. *Bigfoot* is guaranteed fun for all ages!



▲ 'So long as I'm back for tea!'

With *Roxanne* currently riding high in the video charts, RCA/Columbia announce ***Best Seller*** (18) as their next blockbuster on June 3. **Brian Dennehy** (*First Blood, F/X – Murder By Illusion, Cocoon*) plays a cop/writer whose police exploits provide rich content for his best-selling novels. As he moves up The Force his creative juices start to run dry, so when, with the promise of a best seller, he's approached by a professional hit man (**James Woods** – *Salvador*) he cautiously joins forces with him. **Victoria Tennant** (offscreen wife of Steve Martin) plays the role of Dennehy's agent and lover, who also feels the violent hit of Woods. This has got to be THE thriller of the month. James Woods plays the hit man with steely eyed determination to get his story in print, while Dennehy treads cautiously around Woods' past. Saying anymore would spoil the film. Don't miss it!

Two weeks later RCA/Columbia release **Jeff Daniels** and **Melanie Griffith** in the offbeat comedy ***Something Wild*** (RCA/Columbia, 18). When the sexy Lulu (Griffith) bumps into the conventional Charles (Daniels) things are bound to change for one of them. Lulu turns Charles' life upside down but he becomes enchanted by her crazy approach to life, and slowly falls in love. Meanwhile, her psychopathic ex-husband blames her for the way he's turned out, and is hunting her down. All this excitement provides solid entertainment for those with a kooky sense of humour (me included)!

Sean Connery's been in the news lately for his Oscar-winning performance in ***The Untouchables*** (CIC Video, 18), and at the end of June you'll be able to see what all the (well deserved) fuss has been about. Viewers of the successfully re-run TV series will have quite a good idea about the content of the film. **Kevin Costner** (*No Way Out*) plays Eliot Ness (originally played by Robert Stack in the 1959-62 series), a naive but persistent Federal Treasury agent. Jimmy Malone (Connery) teaches Ness the harsh reality of dealing with the mobs of prohibition Chicago in 1931. Ness and his gang of 'untouchables' must put everything on the line to put Al Capone (frigidly played by **Robert De Niro**) behind bars. **Brian DePalma (*Carrie, Dressed To Kill*) directs with Oscar-winning Ennio Morricone (*The Mission*)**

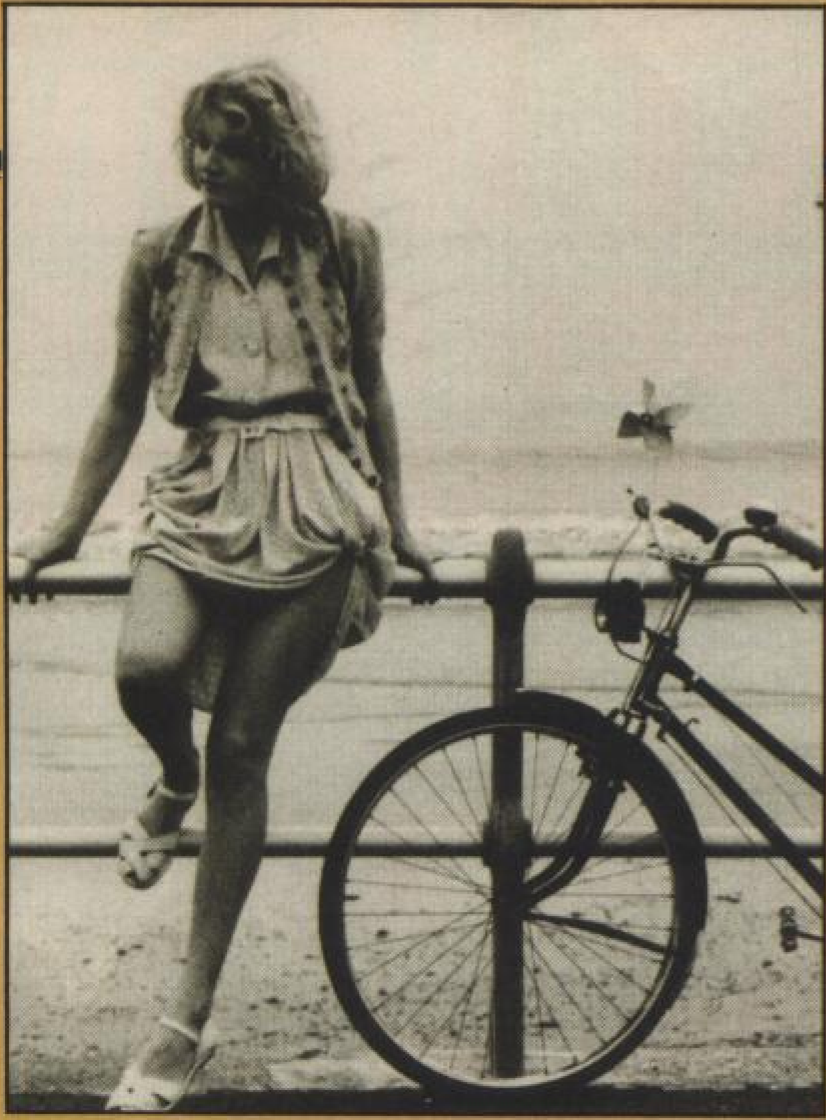
providing a chilling soundtrack. Compulsive viewing for all who can stomach the Sean Connery shooting scene and the nail-biting pram sequence (I'll say no more)!

Joe Dante's (*Gremlins*) ***Innerspace*** (Warner, PG) is available from June 6. Martin Short (*The Three Amigos*) stars as a supermarket



© The Walt Disney Company

assistant who is suddenly injected with the result of a scientific experiment. Not any ordinary experiment, though, this one is a miniaturised Navy vessel containing a human test pilot (**Dennis Quaid** – *The Big Easy, Enemy Mine*)! **Meg Ryan** (*Top Gun*) also stars in this update of the 1966 classic, *Fantastic Voyage*. Its fast-moving script and



▲ Emily Lloyd says, 'Up yer bum!'

comical sequences mustn't be missed. Short, as the hyperchondriac hero, is delightfully superb.

Talking of vessels (and why not?) we come to Disney's ***Flight Of The Navigator*** (CBS/Fox, U). A 12-year-old, played by **Joey Cramer**, is suddenly whisked off by a high-tech spacecraft of which he promptly becomes the navigator. The ship is equipped with all types of aliens – a robotic creature named Max (whose voice is credited to Paul Mall, but actually belongs to **Paul Rubens** aka Pee Wee Hermen of the appalling *Pee Wee's Big Adventure* – strange, but true!) and a veritable range of weird creatures. Eight years later the boy returns home, still aged 12! And I thought I had problems explaining a long lunch hour to our inexplicable Ed, Steve J.

Those of you who love watching the trailers more than the actual film itself will be interested to hear that ***8 Million Ways To Die*** (CBS/Fox) is to be released at the end of June. It was brilliantly trailed on CBS/Fox hire videos almost a year ago. It sounded and looked like a real winner! Has it been worth the wait? Probably not, even though it stars such successful actors as **Jeff Bridges** (*Tron, Jagged Edge, Thunderbolt And Lightfoot*) and **Rosanna Arquette** (*Desperately Seeking Susan*). An ex-cop (Bridges) hits the bottle and gets involved with a lady of the streets (Arquette) and her dangerous associates. The overlong film, like the characters it contains, is unpleasant and uninteresting.

More news for trailer fans. ***The Empire Strikes Back*** and ***Return Of The Jedi*** (both CBS/Fox, U) have finally been released on budget video at £14.99 each. Don't miss the trailer – it's the same on both – which contains by far and away the best editing ever seen on video! Loads of clips from unrelated films stunningly cut together to the ***Star Wars*** theme music. The unsung video (or film – I suspect the latter) editor responsible should receive an Oscar!

Emily 'Up yer bum!' **Lloyd** received worldwide acclaim for her film debut in ***Wish You Were Here*** (Palace Pictures, 15), and now you – the discerning video viewer – will be able to judge for yourself from its imminent video release. It's loosely based on the childhood of Cynthia Payne (in fact **David Leland** co-wrote *Personal Services* – Cynthia Payne's adult exploits). It not only tells of the sexual awakening of Lynda, but also of her life in a seaside town of The Fifties and the numerous jobs which she loses through her outrageous behaviour. A delightfully fresh approach to a seaside comedy!

So many videos and so little time! (You've been watching too many Tom Selleck films – Ed).

▼ Only *8 Million Ways To Die*



TWISTED CIRCUITS

Edited by Mick Gowar
Beaver Books £1.75, 143pp



ONCE, computers made cameo appearances – rarely starring roles – in anthologies of short science fiction stories. In pre-Apollo shutdown days, all eyes and hearts were on deep space and SF abounded; in the more cynical Eighties, sword-and-sorcery – the struggle for Middle Earth and inner mind – is the tendency, and so computers star as gateways to strange worlds.

Twisted Circuits – Hi-Tech Tales From Tomorrow contains eight shorts written with the 'younger reader' in mind. Mercifully, most of them lack the Janet-And-John reading book mentality of Sixties SF 'stories for boys', opting for a more modern cynicism, which helps make them all readable; most of the authors even seem to understand computers . . .

To pick three: *Love Bytes* (**Nicholas Fisk**) concerns a wacky teenager (of tomorrow) and the way she seduces her computer with notions of love so it marries another computer and has a baby. No living happily ever after though – baby's a number-crunching monster prodigy with an unbelievable temper. *Krarg Enters* (**Dennis Hamley**) centres around a witty Middle Earth rewrite (*The Mabbut* by RPP Blenkiron), whose computer game horror comes to effective life, but does the unexpected; while – possibly the best in the anthology – *The Computer Game* (**Phil Cartwright**) sees some sinister aspect in airliner flight simulations when reality intrudes through the game's manual.

These are the best computer stories, but all would improve with some tighter plotting and writing. Only *User Friendly* (**John Gordon**) – a nastily trendy little girl with a cuddly computer-intelligent toy doggie gets her comeuppance – manages to rise to the level of Roald Dahl and give full satisfaction. Still, *Twisted Circuits* avoids talking down and, at a low cost, provides light relief between serious blasting.

ROGER KEAN

NEXT MONTH

COVER MOUNT CASSETTE!

Issue 54 of CRASH has a specially-commissioned double A-side demo cassette on the front of the mag. Featuring a playable demo of System 3's forthcoming LAST NINJA II and a small, but fully playable game of DARKSIDE from Incentive, it promises to be one of the best ever!

To cover the cost of such extravagance, the cover price will increase for this one issue by 25p to £1.50 – a small price to pay for quality approaching excellence!

DARKSIDE – FROM INCENTIVE

Dare you enter the twilight world of the Darkside? Featuring a complete playable game specifically designed for CRASH, Incentive's incredible Freescape routine allows you to move with complete freedom in three dimensions.

EXTRA! Solve the mystery of the Darkside demo and win yourself a home laser kit!

LAST NINJA II – FROM SYSTEM 3

The legendary Ninja warrior has been transported to modern day New York. Are his ancient weapons and martial arts enough to conquer the tough pips of the Big Apple? Try this playable demo and see for yourself.

This special taster includes numerous locations and animated sprites from the finished game. Get a taste of the action – FIRST!

CRASHTIONNAIRE RESULTS

What **YOU** specifically think about the magazine! What your personal likes and dislikes are – just WHAT the avergae CRASH reader wants in life. Check out the facts – next month

MONITOR

Mel Croucher returns to the pages of CRASH with the first in an occasional series touching on the farther reaching effects that computers have had on the human community. Next month's column looks at computer addiction – you aren't addicted to computer games – or are you? Tune in to MONITOR and see just what these digital demons can do to your mind!

CECCO'S LOG

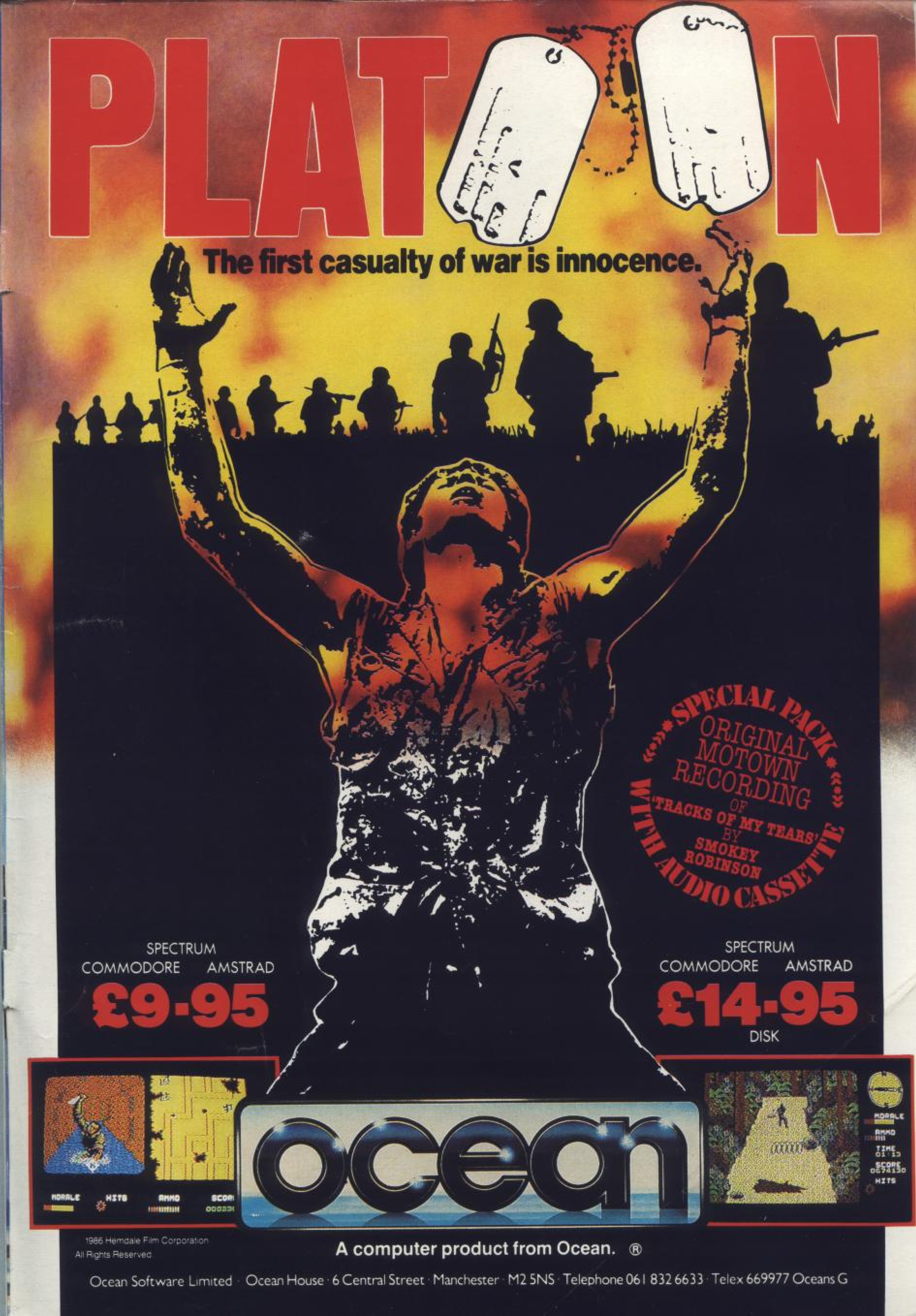
Rafaelle cecco continues his revealing day-by-day account of the ups and downs of Spectrum programming

ALL THIS – Plus the usual NEWS, PREVIEWS, REGULARS, IRREGULARS and hard-hitting, straight-talking REVIEWS from the people in the know. CRASH – the Spectrum mag with its finger on the pulse!

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TAKE 'EM ALL ON...

IT'S THE ONLY WAY TO LIVE!

Screen Star Target Renegade is hugely entertaining and ample justification for a sequel ...it develops the theme and develops the game play no end on the original...Each man is four sprites ...all beautifully drawn with great comic touches. The dog is quite wonderful. **Commodore User**



PCW GAME OF THE WEEK Target Renegade has the added essence of variety, which is not to be found on other games of this kind. Fear not, this is well worth the readies. **PCW Game of the week**



Every move you make, every step you take, they're watching you. Fight your way through the precinct – the back alleys, the car parks, fight your way through the villainous community, the skinheads, the Beastie Boys, the bouncers. On a hot, steamy night in New York this is just the tip of the iceberg on your chilling quest to confront "MR. BIG". A spectacular arcade style brawl with many hoodlams and hellhounds to encounter – this is target Renegade – if it moves, it hurts!

CASSETTE

SPECTRUM	AMSTRAD
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imagine ...the name of the game

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